

He is Omniscient
A Course on the Knowledge and Science of Islam

- 2 -

Knowing the Imams

Volume 12

The Knowledge of Imam Ali

Allamah Sayyid Muhammad
Husayn Husayni Tihrani

Translated by
Rahim P. Dawlati and Salim Rossier

Editor
Sayyed Khalil Toussi

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Seyyed Hossein Nasr

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The 12th Volume of Knowing the Imams contains:

1. The occulted knowledge of Imam Ali
2. Imam Ali's knowledge of affliction, duration of life, and discord
3. Different sciences that have been manifested from Imam Ali
4. Imam Ali's knowledge of the Torah and Bible, and his assertion of "Do ask me before I pass away!"

Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Husayni Tihirani (1926-1995) was a respected intellectual, jurist, mystic and philosopher who trained and guided many students during his lifetime. He was an eloquent speaker and prolific writer, and left numerous books and treatises for later generations.

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‘Allāmah Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī

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Note: While it is common in Persian or Arabic to place blessings on the Prophet or the Imams (you may find an "as," "s," or "pbh" something similar after the names of the Imams), it is not common practice in an English text. Readers should just say the phrase of blessings in their heart when they see reference to the Prophet or Imams.

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Including:

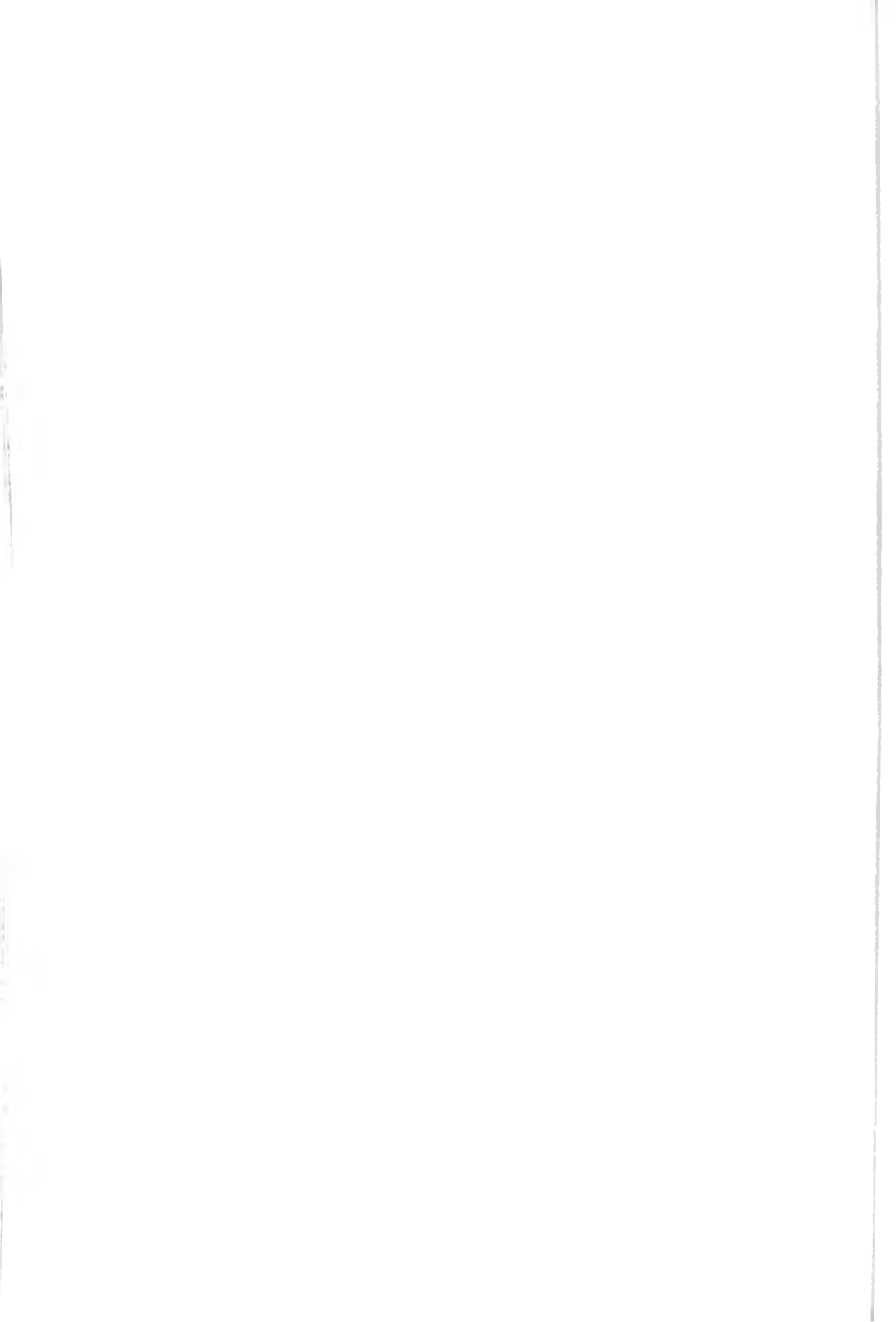
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**Lessons One Hundred Sixty-Six
to One Hundred Seventy**

The Occulted Knowledge of Imam Ali



LESSONS ONE HUNDRED SIXTY-SIX TO ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

On the infallibility of the prophets and the Imams, upon them be
peace

And blessings be upon Muhammad and his pure progeny, and may
God's curse be on their enemies from now until the Day of Resur-
rection! And there is no power or strength except for the Lofty,
Glorious God.

The Wise God has stated in His Glorious Book:

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا أَمَرَ مَنْ أَزْوَى مِنْ رُسُلِهِ أَنْ يَخْبُرَ مِنْ غَيْبِهِ
رَسُولًا يُسَمِّرُ أَنْ قَدْ آتَيْنَاهُمْ رَسُولَاتٍ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَخَاطِبًا بِالَّذِينَمْ وَأَخَصَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا.

...[He is the] *Knower of Unseen and never discloses his Unseen [secret] to anyone; except to a messenger whom He is pleased with. Then He makes a band of watching guards to escort before and behind him, so that He may discern that they have delivered the messages of their Lord—and He encircles all that remains with them, and counts everything in number (72:26–28).*

The first part of the verse indicates that only God has knowledge of the Unseen—all different kinds of Unseen knowledge, especially when He has used the noun instead of pronoun, i.e.

غَيْبِهِ.

That is, He has not stated it in a simple statement with a pronoun like

فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَيْهِ

("it is not disclosed to him"), for He states: *whosoever of the messengers He approves and he is pleasant to Him, He will let him know of His knowledge of the unseen, will remove the veil away from his vision, and make him acquainted with the unseen—He will empower him with His knowledge of the unseen."*

For removing the veil from the messengers' vision and giving them the knowledge of the unseen, He assigned two groups of guards to them: a group of them are the angels who stand before them (who have been appointed after the messengers received the knowledge of the unseen), and they are all alert so that Satan does not tempt the messengers when they are among the people and guiding them, for this is the very occasion upon which they may betray

the God-given knowledge of the unseen. The next ones are the angels who stand behind them. They are the angels that were assigned before the messengers received the knowledge. They were already standing between the revelation and its descent into the hearts of the messengers. They were in charge of keeping away any interference from above. The angels in this group are those who are responsible for safeguarding the revelation so that it will be intact until it descends into the pure hearts of the messengers.

The main task of all these guards and the reason for their guarding the messengers is only one thing, that is, to keep the revelation safe and sound, away from any intruders, when it is descending from the Divine. This statement:

لِيَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا

Because to know that they have given His communication makes it clear that the verb

لِيَعْلَمَ

so that to know refers to His creations [including the universe and His religions and *Shari'ah*] and not to understanding His essence. The knowledge of God's creations [is not like sensual knowledge of human beings, images imprinted on the mind]; rather is the very reality of external affairs, which is not separate from external realities. Therefore, the knowledge of existent beings is not acquired knowledge, but knowledge by presence. The meaning of knowledge by presence is that the existence and the realization of the object known is present in the soul of the knower. Therefore, the meaning of *li y'alam* is "so as to be certain." So the foregoing statement means: these two groups of prior and posterior angels are there to convey God's messages to the Prophet.¹

This kind of dispatching is similar to the way sultans send messengers and commanders to their people. First they assign some guards and watchmen to look after them and protect them from theft and loss, and second, they assign other guards before they reach the destination, so no one can alter anything in the messages on the way. So from the start until the destination, the guards keep their eyes on them.

So first, when the revelations are sent to the messenger by God, nothing should be altered or displaced in them. All this is done for the messengers to assure that the revelations are the original ones. And second, after being certain that a revelation is correct, without any alteration to it, the messenger tries to keep it the same way that it is. And then, after being certain that a revelation is sound, and he

has also kept it as it is, without adding anything to it or taking away anything, he conveys it to the people. It is necessary for a messenger to have these three steps of infallibility. According to the statement of the Qur'an, infallibility is the most important thing a messenger must have, and apart from this infallibility, the Qur'an says: "There is also something for him afterward."

Further, the verse points out that God [God's perfection] encompasses entire levels of existence, of this worldly and of all the levels of immaterial realms, including the imaginal and rational realms. He is aware of the measure of the atoms and their ipseity; so is He aware of the messengers, of how much talent, belief, thought, knowledge, tradition, unseen knowledge, and tolerance for the people they could have. He is aware of all of them, and for this very reason, He has selected them and is pleased with them.

Some points must be mentioned here:

The first one is that the whole of knowledge, especially the knowledge of the unseen, is specified as belonging to God, and no one has access to it. However, whatever knowledge creatures have is given to them by the owner of the whole of knowledge, and according to the competence and capacity of each, every single living creature has received a certain level of knowledge that has been bestowed on it. On this matter, there are some verses that clearly state that the entirety of knowledge belongs to God, and He is the main source of the unseen and secret world; this verse mentions it clearly:

وَعِنْدَهُ مَنَاجِبُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرْ وَالتَّجْرِ وَمَا يُنْطَفِ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

...and with Him are the keys to the Unseen, and [no one] but He knows them! He knows whatever exists in the earth and what is at the sea; no leaf falls but He knows it, not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor any tender or withered [stalk falls] unless it is [recorded] in a manifest Book (6:59).

In addition, there are these verses:

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَهَانَ يَسْتَوْنَ

...say, "None in the heavens or on the earth knows the Unseen except God!" And none realizes when they will be raised up again (27:65).

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ الْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

...and to God belongs the Unseen in the heavens and the earth; and the matter of the Hour is like a twinkling of the eye, or even much closer (16:77).

[As the unseen knowledge is given to everyone He wills] there is

no contradiction in this verse when it says that God considers the unseen knowledge to belong to the messengers.

In the Holy Qur'an, there are many similar verses that say that human knowledge and other perfections are either independent or dependent and either essential or accidental, such as this verse:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ

...it is God that takes away the souls (39:42).

In comparison with the next one, this verse shows restriction:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا

...and He sends guardians over you so that whenever death approaches one of you, Our messengers receive him (6:61).

This verse does as well:

فَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ لَِلَّهِ يَجِيءُ

...[do they seek prestige through them?] But indeed the prestige belongs to God (4:139). And

وَاللَّهُ الْبَرُّ وَرُسُلُهُ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

...but all prestige belongs to God, and His Messenger, and the believers; however, the hypocrites do not know (63:8). In this verse, apart from specifying that all prestige belongs to God, He has also assigned it to the messengers and the believers.

Therefore, the unseen knowledge is necessary for the messengers of God, and this matter is not inconsistent with its being specific to God.

The second point: there are many verses in the Qur'an that say that the Prophet and his descendants deny having unseen knowledge:

قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ إِنَّمَا اتَّبَعْتُ مَا نَسُوحَىٰ إِلَىٰ قُلْ فَلْيُنصِتُوا لِمَا نَحْنُ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُفَكِّرُوا

...say, "I do not tell you that I own the treasures of God, nor do I know the Unseen, nor do I even tell you I am an angel. I merely follow what has been inspired in me." Say, "Are the blind and the sighted equal? So do you not think it over?" (6:50).

Similarly, there is this verse:

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَاسْتَكْفَرْتُ مِنَ الْكُفْرِ وَلَاسْتَفْتَنِي الشُّعْرَاءُ إِنِّي إِلَّا لَنَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

...say, "I do not own benefit for myself, or loss, except what Allah will. If I

had known the Unseen, I would have acquired much good, and evil would never touch me. I am merely an adviser and the news-bearer for the people who believe" (7:188).

There is the following verse as well:

قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدَعَايِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا يُفْعَلُ بِي وَلَا بِكُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ إِلَّا بُرْهَانٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ

...say, "I am not a beginner among the messengers [to claim prophethood], nor do I know what will happen to me, or to you; I only follow what has been revealed to me, and I am just a plain Warner [that is, it is my warning that makes people avoid sinning] (46:9).

In all these verses and similar ones, the Messenger of God denies that the knowledge is his own; rather he says it belongs to God, and He has trusted him with some of it so that he may use it. He confesses: I am as a mirror to reflect and cast the knowledge of God. The main source of the knowledge is God, and it has been reflected on me; not only do I not know the unseen knowledge, but I lack any kind of knowledge as well. All my knowledge belongs to God. He has trusted it to me inasmuch as He knows it is better for me and where and when I should use it. Then when the assigned time comes to an end, the knowledge returns to Him. It is because He is the source of the knowledge; the beginning and the end is with Him. I have not brought it independently by myself and neither has God bestowed it upon me by way of mandate. It is reflected and illuminated in me, who am a mirror. Hence, not only do I not have the knowledge of the unseen, but I do not have any kind of knowledge. All my knowledge is from God, which is manifested to and illuminated in me according to the measure that He has willed, and at any time He wishes. When the time passes away, it returns to Him, for He is its source, its origin, and its return. So in reality, I have no knowledge, I have no power over any benefit or any harm, and have I no authority over life or death. All these attributes are sealed in God, belong to God, and return to God. This life has been given to me as borrowed, and it will return to its source.

It says in chapter of *al-A'raf*:

قُلْ لَا أَنِيتُكَ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَآئَةً اللَّهُ

...say, "I do not own benefit for myself, or loss, except what God will" (7:188).

And it is stated in the chapter of *Yūnus*:

قُلْ لَا أَنِيتُكَ لِنَفْسِي ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا إِلَّا مَآئَةً اللَّهُ

...say, "I have no power to control any wrong or advantage by myself, except what God will" (10:49).

The third point is in the verse we mentioned at the beginning:

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا.

This is a station for the messengers that God is pleased with and whom He has approved:

إِلَآئِمِنْ أَرْتَقَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ.

They have been specified here, that is, they are not only the messengers but also the prophets. In this case, we see that God has sent His revelations to those who are prophets (those whom He has approved), and not simply to the messengers; and then He has informed them of the unseen knowledge. So as the verse mentions:

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَيْنِهِ.

[O Muhammad,] We sent revelation to you as We sent revelation to Noah and the messengers who were assigned after him.

Of course the term

رَسُولٌ

used in the verse

إِلَآئِمِنْ أَرْتَقَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ

only refers to messengers of God, so other people do not enjoy the sweetness of the unseen knowledge.

The case concerning the Imams is the same in the Qur'anic verse. On the one hand, we see that God attributes to them patience and certainty

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَّا هَبْرَؤَ وَلَا كَلْؤَ أَبَآئِهِمْ يُؤْخَرُونَ

...and We appointed from among them [some] leaders to guide [people] by Our command, once they were patient and had sure faith in Our signs (32:24).

On the other hand, the unveiling of the unseen knowledge and seeing the dominion of the heavens and the earth are introductions to attaining the station of certainty, as this verse states:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ

...and thus We showed Abraham the dominion of the heavens and the earth so that he becomes one of those having certainty (6:75). [That means he confirms the unity of God and His attributes, and submits to the Lord of the Worlds, and tells Azar and his community, who were idol-worshippers, to stop going astray.]

Moreover, in chapter *al-Takāthur*, the vision of Hell and the witnessing of the dominion of blazing fire are considered to be concomitant with the knowledge of certainty. Hence, the knowledge of certainty is necessary for the unveiling of the unseen, and for entry into the world of Divine Unity and the Unity of the Oneness of the Divine Essence, as it is written in this verse:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَسْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ.

...[it is not what you think,] if you know the Unseen knowledge, you will absolutely see Hell and blazing fire (102:6).

Further, for all the Imams and wayfarers on the path of Divine Unity who have followed the Imams and crossed the stations of the material and natural world, and who have followed the way of the righteous ones and the straight path of the purification of the soul—for them the unveiling of the veils of darkness and light is necessary. The following verse refers to them:

فَكَفَعْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

...so We have removed from you your covering, so your sight today is [sharp and] piercing (50:22).

Whatever problem was impossible to solve and hard to address for ordinary people, it was easy for them to find the solution.

The fourth point is that the meaning of the unseen in this verse is a kind of unseen in this world that is hidden from our external senses, although for some whose senses can perceive, it is not hidden. For example, tomorrow's affairs are unknown to us, but for those who are going to witness tomorrow, they are not unseen any more. The information of things witnessed externally are hidden to the blind and deaf, but for a person with sight and sound hearing, it is witnessed.

Whatever is clear to the angels and is within their reach in the higher worlds is quite unknown to man in the natural life down on the earth, because the object of witnessing and the unseen are considered according with their position and mode of being. According to the clear explanation of the Qur'an, resurrection and what occurs after death are considered to be unseen affairs, so the Qur'an considers believing in the resurrection to be an example of believing in the unseen, although it will be real witnessing for the dead. As the Qur'an says:

ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ مَجْمُوعٍ لِّلنَّاسِ وَذَلِكَ يَوْمُ مَشْهُودٍ

...that [Day of Resurrection] is a Day on which the people are gathered, and such is the Day that will be witnessed (11:103).

The fifth point: according to the principles of the Islamic creed and the logic of the Qur'an, all existent beings are the Names and Attributes of His Excellency the Truth, the sublime and lofty, and creation, in the sense of the coming into existence, is not separate from the encompassment of the act of the essence, attributes, and Name of the essence of the Divine Unity; that is, every single creature represents the pure essence of the sacred Unity of Being. Every single thing that is created is one of His Names. From the aspect of being and existence, for example, life is the manifestation of [the Divine] Name of Life (*Hayy*); from the aspect of His Name Power, power comes into existence; from the aspect of the Divine Name Knowing, knowledge manifests in any knower. This is the case with all Divine Names and Attributes, such as Wisdom, Will, and so on.

Therefore, for those who by the permission of God have made inroads towards the unseen knowledge, it is not that they have become knowers of the unseen equal to God; otherwise, their possession of independent power would contradict the Sacred Being as the Source of Power. God never gives away a tiniest bit of His knowledge to anyone, nor would He do it, because giving away His knowledge would mean there is a kind of division in His knowledge, but His knowledge is a perfect unit. The meaning of the entrusting of His knowledge to someone is quite different from giving away His knowledge; so entrusting His knowledge to someone does not contradict the Unity of Holy Divine Being.

Bestowing something dependently means, for example, the way in which the sun casts its light, when it shines, on every single thing exposed to it, and it gives light and warmth to anything in its way, but it does not break its light into fractions and then give it to each single thing separately. The sun's light does not remain with the object to which the light is given forever. The sun casts its light as long as it is clearly seen in the sky, and when it is gone, its light also disappears. When the light falls and the source of the light reaches the horizon, it wraps up and takes away its light with it. It leaves everything in such a darkness as if there was no light before that.

The sun does not separate from its light, and casting light around does not damage its integrity. It is the same for it whether it gives light to a tiny bit of a thing or to the whole world, the seas, the oceans, and anything in its way, or even those out of reach. It is not stingy in giving its light according to the need of every single object.

The knowledge of the Almighty God is the same. The whole of existence is as a mirror to receive His light and cast it around. Nor is God stingy in casting forth His knowledge freely; His knowledge is

received by everyone needing it, either as the awareness of a fly, or as the knowledge of a human. He lets common people, the *jinn*, the angels, and the animals receive it. In addition to these, it is special high knowledge that the Imams and prophets receive. If He informs them with the knowledge of the unseen, the mysterious unseen, and everything hidden from the common people, then it is just a tiny thing for Him to do, and it never damages the Kingdom of the Giver, God. Rather, it is His very unbounded greatness and Beauty that makes the existential world possible as the reflector and mirror of His Attributes.

The Imam is as a mirror and sign, and he is a name. In other words, he is a perfect mirror to reflect the knowledge of the Almighty God. As the Qur'an says:

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذُرُوا الَّذِينَ يُطْعَمُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ سَيُزَوِّنَ مَا كَانُوا يَسْمَلُونَ

...and to God belong the Finest Names, so appeal to Him by those [Names] and leave those alone who blaspheme against His Names; they will be chastised for what they have been doing (7:180).

The sixth point: the existence in the world of nature, including inorganic solids, animals, and humans, though due to their different levels of existence and natures they are various, are all manifestations of the Oneness and Unity. However, when their particularities of time, space, and other accidents, which make the individuality and uniqueness of their external realization, are overlooked, that aspect of unity is seen to be existent in all. So all these different individuals, due to that aspect of unity, are associated with each other, and become existent and grow, and in the spiritual path of their perfection traverse the way forward.

The command of Unity, which is from the world of Command and Dominion, is called an angel, and the governing angel in the *Shari'ah*. In a mystical and philosophical language, it is called *muthul al-Aflāṭūniyyah* (the Platonic Ideas of Forms).

The late Mullā Ṣadrā Shirāzī has philosophically explained this matter in his *al-Asfār al-Arba'a*, and we have also discussed this subject in session 7 of the book *Mu'ād Shināsi* (Knowing Eschatology). Theologically speaking, religious knowledge is attained through the angels, who emanate it upon the seeker of that knowledge until he reaches the universal knowledge of the Divine.

The seventh point: this is shown especially in the verse:

إِلَّا مَن أَزَلَّاهُ مِن رَّسُولٍ

That is, the Almighty God connects the heart of His Messenger to the

unseen knowledge when it is needed in his mission, when preaching a sermon and inviting people to the true religion of Islam, and reciting verses and demonstrating miracles based upon the truth.

In the Holy Qur'an, God mentions the statement of the prophet Ṣāliḥ, which is based on the unseen, to his people:

فَصَرُّوْهَا هَالِكًا تَمْتَحُوْا فِي دَارِكُمْ ثَلَاثَةَ اَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ وَعْدُ غَيْرٍ مَّكَذُوْبٍ

...so they mistreated her, so he said, "[but the chastisement of God will fall upon you, so] now enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days! This is a never-be-untruth promise [of God, and He never states any untruth] (11:65).

And the statement of the prophet Jesus (ʿĪsā Ibn Maryam), which he said to the chiefs of the Jews, the Children of Israel, is similar:

وَأَنبِئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُوْنَ وَمَا تَكْنُتُوْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِن فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ

...and [without anyone to know what you are doing,] I announce you what you may eat, and what you should store up in your own houses. There is indeed a sign [of the unseen] for you in this [if you are believers] (3:49).

And the events such as the unseen glad tidings that have taken place, and the promises that were given to Noah, Hūd, Shuʿayb, and Lūṭ concerning the chastisements of the messengers, have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. And in chapter of Rome, the defeat of Rome is by these miracles that the Prophet of God predicted by the unseen knowledge given to him, such as:

الرَّحْلِيَّتِ الرُّومُ فِي أَقْصَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ تَحْتِ الْعِلْمِ سَيَخْلُوْنَ فِي بَعْضِ سِنِينَ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ يَمِينِهِ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ²

A, L, M; The Romans were defeated, in the nearest part of this land [of the Arabs³ by the Farsi]; however, [in the forthcoming few years, within three or nine years] following their defeat they will be victorious [and become happy].

There is a hadith from Imam Riḍā in Muhammad Ibn Faḍl Ḥāshimī in Quṭb Rāwandī's *Kharāyij wa Jarāyih* that says that he looked at Ibn Hidhāb and said: "If I inform you that in a few days, one of your relatives will be murdered and you will face this tragic event, then will you accept and prove my righteousness?" He answered: "Never, because no one can inform you of the unseen knowledge besides God, the Almighty."

He said:

Is it not the straight statement of God that:

عَلَّا الْقَيْبَ فَلَا يَطْلُو عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَنَ ارْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ

"The knowledge of the unseen world does not manifest to anyone except if he is related to the Prophet," so we are the inheritors of the Prophet and are approved by the Almighty God; that is, we are the offspring of the same Prophet that God has acquainted with the whole knowledge of the unseen world. And then, the Prophet has instructed us to know all the events, known and unknown, up to the Day of Resurrection."⁴

There are numerous hadiths on this subject, and all of them clearly explain that the Prophet received his knowledge of the unseen world through the revelations; and then, the Immaculate Imams received it from the Prophet through heredity. So they have received the knowledge of the unseen world in this way. The knowledge of the unseen world of Imam Ali is narrated in the hadith books, history books, and authentic Qur'anic exegeses (*tafāsīr*). As they are too many to explain in this part of the book, we mention only few of them.

On the event of the year 188 AH, it has been mentioned in *Murūj al-Dhihab*:

Hārūn al-Rashīd went for pilgrimage in this year, and it was the last *hajj* pilgrimage he was taking. As Hārūn's way back was through Kūfa, Abu Bakr 'Ayyāsh, one of his learned, high-ranking chiefs, said: "My guess is that from now on, neither Hārūn nor any other caliph from the dynasty of Banī 'Abbās will go on the *hajj* pilgrimage via this road."

When he was asked whether he was predicting it through the knowledge of the unseen world, his answer was positive. Then they asked him to make known if he was informing them through revelation, and he said it was true. Some asked him to make known if he had received the revelation himself. He answered: "Now, it has been revealed to Muhammad." Meanwhile, while pointing at a certain spot, he said: "And the Prophet has informed us that Imam Ali was also murdered right at this place."⁵

The author of *Murūj al-Dhihab* is Ali Ibn Husayn Mas'ūdī, who died in 346 AH, and he wrote this book in 330 AH, that is, 320 years before the Banī 'Abbās dynasty was overthrown by Ḥulākū Khān, and in the meantime the last caliph, al-Mu'taṣim Billāh, was murdered. Abu Bakr Ibn 'Ayyāsh narrated this hadith in 188 AH from Imam Ali, at nearly the end of the second century, before they were overthrown. And strangely, after that event, for five centuries not a

single man from the caliphs of Banī ʿAbbās went on the *hajj* pilgrimage!

Quṭb Rāwandī, in *Kharāyij wa Jarāryih*, has narrated from Diʿbil Khuzāʿī, quoting Imam Riḍā, narrating from his grandfather:

I was in the presence of Imam Bāqir when some of the Shiʿa, including Jābir Ibn Yazīd, came to him and asked: "Was your father, Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, pleased with the caliphates of the first two?" Imam Bāqir answered: "O Jābir Ibn Yazīd, go to the house of Jābir Ibn Abdullah Anṣārī and tell him: 'Muhammad Ibn Ali wants to see you.'" Jābir Ibn Yazīd said:

I went to the house of Jābir Ibn Abdullah and knocked on the door, and then he called back while he was still inside: "Wait a moment, Jābir!" I was surprised that he knew I was behind the door and knocking, because no one except the Prophet and the Imams had such knowledge of the unseen! I said: "Now, by God, if he comes out from the house I will ask him to let me know the secret!" So when he came out of his house I asked him: "Please tell me how you knew I was Jābir Ibn Abdullah!"

Jābir Ibn Abdullah Anṣārī said: "Last night, my Master, Imam Bāqir, told me that he would ask Ḥanafīyyah about the matter today, and God willing, I will send him to you tomorrow morning and I will call you." I said: "You are quite right; the case is as you say."

Jābir Ibn Abdullah said: "Now take me to him." So we set out together until we reached the mosque. When my Master, Imam Bāqir, saw us, he turned his face to us, and in the meantime told the people sitting with him: "Here they are. Now stand up and ask this elderly man what you want to know. He will inform you of what he has witnessed; he is aware of everything."

They asked him: "O Jābir, was your Imam, Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, pleased with those two previous caliphs?" Jābir said: "Never! God knows that he was never satisfied with them." They asked him: "If he was not pleased with them, then how could he marry Khawlah to one of the captives?"

Jābir said:

Oh! I was always worried that I would die without anyone asking me about this matter! Now that you have asked me, do listen carefully and memorize it. I was present and witnessing in

the same place when they brought the captives, and Hanafiyyah was among them. As he noticed the crowd's gathering there, he turned toward the grave of the Prophet, went closer, and sat by the grave and began mourning and crying and then addressing him:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ، هَؤُلَاءِ أُمَّتُكَ سَبَّحْتَ سَبْحَ التَّوْبِ وَ
الدَّيْلَمِ، وَاللَّهُ مَا كَانَ لَنَا إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ ذَنْبٍ إِلَّا الْبَلَّ إِلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِكَ الْخَيْرَاتِ الْحَسَنَةِ
سَيِّئَةٍ، وَالنَّجِيَّةِ حَسَنَةٍ، فَسَيِّئًا.

Peace be upon you O Prophet of God, may God's blessing be upon you, O Messenger of God! These people, who are of your nation, have arrested us as the captives of Nawbah and Daylam. By God, we have done nothing bad to them; rather we have leaned towards your Household! However, now goodness has given way to wickedness, and wickedness to goodness!

Then he turned his face toward the people and said:

Why have you arrested us for our saying:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

"I witness there is no deity worthy of worship except God?"

They answered: "It is because you have avoided giving *zakāt* from your income and property."

Khawlah said: "Suppose our people have not paid their share of *zakāt*, what is the fault of their Muslim children and wives?" It was then that every one of those people chose one of the women for himself while the narrator was standing, gazing at them without being able to say anything! Both Khālid Ibn Ghassān and Ṭalḥa had an inclination towards Khawlah. Each one of them wanted to marry her, and according to custom, each one spread a piece of cloth over her. She said: "Look, I am not naked; you are trying to cover me!" Someone said: "But both of them would like to marry you."

Khawlah said: "Far be it from me! It is really a vain intention! No one can marry me and be my permanent husband unless he informs me what happened to me at my birth." Almost all the people there kept quiet. Some were looking about in

surprise, and some were wondering what they were witnessing. All of them were shocked at what the woman was speaking about.

Abu Bakr said: "Why are you keeping quiet? You have come to your wits' end! This woman is one of the greatest in her tribe. She is not accustomed to what she is seeing now, so she is frightened. She is saying something for which it is not possible to find an answer."

Khawlah said: "O you! You are speaking nonsense; you are shooting your arrow at the wrong target! By God, I am not frightened, nor am I in a panic. By God, I am speaking the truth. By the one lying in this grave, I have never lied to you!" She expressed herself and then kept quiet.

Khālid Ibn Ghassān and Ṭalḥa, who were ready to take her into their possession, now took away their cloths from over the woman and she moved away, sitting by the people.

Soon Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib came into sight and went straight into the mosque, and he was informed of the case of the woman. After hearing what they said, he stated that Khawlah had spoken the truth. Her story when her mother gave birth to her was such-and-such. And then he stated: "Whatever she has told you about the day she was born is written on a soft little tablet that is with her."

Soon after hearing what Imam Ali said, Khawlah took out the tablet and threw it on the ground in front of the people; then she picked it up and read it for Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib. It was exactly what he had said to the gathering.

Abu Bakr told him: "O Abu al-Hasan, take this woman for yourself; may God bless you for your rightful action." At that very moment Salmān Fārsī stood up and said: "No one can take Imam Ali to task and hold him indebted to someone, but you should feel indebted to God, the Prophet, and Imam Ali. By God, Ali did not take this woman for his own unless through his miraculous power and limitless knowledge—such power and knowledge that all the owners of knowledge are inferior before him."

After Salmān, Miqdād stood up and said: "What is wrong with them that when God shows them the road to guidance, they avoid it and take the wrong way? There is no tribe and group for whom the reasoning of Imam Ali has been made clear."

Then Abūdhār said: "It is strange that one shows enmity against the truth! On all occasions, Ali has expressed the truth. O you people! God has manifested to you the virtues of the virtuous!" Then he went on shouting: "O such-and-such! You are indebted to the people of truth for giving you your rights, whereas they are more deserving and worthy of whatever you have!"

‘Ammār said: "I call God to witness between you and me, and I am ready to discuss it with you! Let me know, did we not greet Ali the time the Prophet of God saluted him and offered him peace and blessing? Did we not tell him: 'Peace be upon you O the Master of the Faithful'?"

At that moment Omar interrupted him and Abu Bakr stood up and took Khawlah to the house of Asmā, the daughter of ‘Omays, telling her to look after her and respect and honor her while she stayed with her.

Khawlah stayed with Asmā until her brother came to her, and Ali Ibn Abi Tālib married her with the permission of her brother. And the corrupt people say that Ali married Khawlah as a captive, which is wrong. The truth is that he took her as his legitimate wife with her brother's permission—it was not because she was a captive.

Those people told Jābir: "May God save you from Hell-fire, for you saved us from doubting about that event!"⁶

Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī in *Madinat al-Mu‘ājiz* from the book *Siyar al-Ṣiḥāba* by means of his chains from Imam Bāqir has narrated this story in detail.⁷

Ibn Shahr Āshūb, in *al-Manāqib*, in the section of *al-ikhbār bi al-fitan wa al-Malāḥim*, has narrated from Imam Bāqir concerning this hadith that when Khālīd and Ṭalḥa laid the cloths over the woman, she said: "O people, I am not naked that you are trying to dress me, and I am not a beggar that you are donating charity to me!" It was then that Zubayr said: "Their aims are you only!"

Khawlah said: "No one can be my husband unless it is he who can inform me what my mother said at the time of my birth." Then Imam Ali came and said:

O Khawlah, listen to me and receive the right answer to your question! When your mother was pregnant, and then when she was suffering with the pain of delivering you, she cried and supplicated to God to give her

enough blessings so as to deliver you safe and sound! Therefore, her supplication about your safety and your healthy life in the future was accepted.

Your mother wrote this on a tablet and buried it just where you were born. Later on, when your mother was about to pass away, she drew your attention to the buried statement and then declared that it should be given to you. You took that written article and tied it to your arm under your shirt, and then when they arrested you, you stood in front of them with no panic! Now, bring that piece of writing to me.

The hadith goes on up to the end. The woman stayed with Asmā until her brother came to her. It was then that Imam Ali asked him if he might marry his sister, and after his agreement, Ali married Asmā by her own will after paying her lawful bridal gift.

Here, Ibn Shahr Āshūb, who has narrated this hadith as well as the other hadiths of Imam Ali, says:

All these hadiths of the unseen knowledge that the Prophet of God has transferred to Imam Ali are those that God has informed him of, as the Almighty God states:

عَلَى الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَقُولُ يَتَذَقَّرُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا لِيَبْلُغَ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدًا.

...[He is the] *Knower of the Unseen and never discloses His Unseen [secret] to anyone; except to a messenger whom He is pleased with. Then He makes a band of watching guards to escort before and behind him, so that He may discern that they have delivered the messages of their Lord—and He encircles all that remains with them, and counts everything in number (72:26–28).*

Nor was the Prophet grudging in giving this unseen knowledge to his successor, as God, the Almighty, states:

وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ. (81:24)

And neither was Imam Ali sparing with it: he freely transferred it to his successors. Therefore, no one can give this kind of news away except the inheritor that the Prophet of God has appointed.⁸

As the grandfather of Khawlah was Ḥanafīyyah Ibn Lājīm, she was called Khawlah Ḥanafīyyah, and her son was called Muhammad Ibn Ḥanafīyyah, so as to distinguish him from the other sons of Ali, Hasan and Husayn. Apart from Hasan and Husayn, Muhammad was the bravest and most knowledgeable among the other children

of Imam Ali, and he was the bearer of the banner at the Battles of Jamāl and Ṣiffin.

Ibn Khallakān explains the relation of his mother Khawlah as follows: Khawlah, the daughter of Ja'far Ibn Qays Ibn Maslamāt Ibn Abdullāh, Ibn Taghliba, Ibn Yarbū' Ibn Taghlaba Ibn al-Duwal, Ibn Ḥanafīyyah, Ibn Laḥīm. And following him, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd adds: Ibn Ṣa'b Ibn Ali Ibn Bakr, Ibn Wā'il.⁹ Khawlah at the time of Abu Bakr's caliphate was arrested in the battles of Ridḍa, and they took her to Medina.

It must be known that the Battles of Ridḍa that took place at the time of Abu Bakr were of two kinds: the first one was for their turning away from Islam, like the battle with Musaylamāt Kadhḥāb and 'Anasī Kadhḥāb with Ṭulayḥa and some others. The second one was because of their refusing to respect Abu Bakr's caliphate.

The sign of the first one was that they did not establish prayers and did not give the call to prayer, nor were they obeying the other rituals of the religion. And the second group's fault was that although they called for prayers and prayed, they refused to pay *zakāt* (their income tax) to the caliph, and they said: "The Prophet has assigned a successor to govern after him, so we will pay our *zakāt* to him. We will abstain from paying *zakāt* to the false caliph as long as this caliph and inheritor is among us." This is the Battle of Khālīd Ibn Walīd with the Tribe of Banī Yarbū', which is the same to which Ḥanafīyyah and Mālīk Ibn Nuwayra also belonged, and Khawlah was arrested in the same battle.

Mālīk Ibn Nuwayra came to Medina at the time of the Prophet, and he embraced Islam in his presence, and then he asked the Prophet for his advice. He advised him to obey Imam Ali. He had already heard from the Prophet of Ali's successorship, while he was the chief of his tribe. He was also a brave, ambitious man, as well as a poet.

When the Prophet passed away, he went to Medina with some people of Banī Tamīm. Upon his arrival there, he noticed that Abu Bakr was sitting on the pulpit of the Prophet of God, so he asked him:

مَنْ أَرَاكَ هَذَا الْخَيْبَرُ وَقَدْ جَلَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ وَصِيَّهُ وَأَمَرَنِي بِمُؤَالَاهِ؟

"Who has let you climb this pulpit while the Prophet of God has assigned Ali as his successor and has commanded me to follow him?"

Abu Bakr ordered someone to send him out of the mosque, so Qunfudh Ibn Omar and Khālīd Ibn Walīd sent him out of the mosque. Mālīk returned to his tribe and advised the people, who had decided not to pay their *zakāt*: "We have accepted this religion, and

now we are Muslims, so keep the *zakāt* of yours with you until we deliver it to the rightful successor of the Prophet."

After hearing what Mālik said, Abu Bakr called Khālid and told him: "Do you see what Mālik said to his tribe? I am afraid that he may cause a severe problem among the people, so go and kill him."

Khālid went to Baṭāh with some of his fighters, but he found no one there to fight. After investigating, his men told him: "We saw that all the people in the tribe, after listening to the call to prayer, stood up to pray." Also, Abu Qutādah and Ḥārith Ibn Ribʿī, who were members of Banī Salemah, bore witness that they had also seen that the whole army had established prayer. However, Khālid paid no attention to what they said. When the night fell, he called out to the tribe: "If you are Muslims, then put down your arms!" They carried out what Khālid said. But hardly had they put their arms down, when Khālid attacked them and killed Mālik Ibn Nuwayra and several of the Banī Thaʿlabat Ibn Yarbūʿ and ʿĀṣim and ʿUbayd. ʿArīn and Jaʿfar were also among them. They were all beheaded. Then he made a demonstration of their heads, set a fire, and cooked a meal to celebrate. At night, he took the wife of Mālik, Umm Tamīm, the daughter of Minhāl, who was a beautiful woman, whom Khālid had already seen and had fallen in love with, so he went to bed with her! When Mālik was being killed, he had told her: "Now, because of showing up and demonstrating your beauty, you sent me to death."

Abu Qutādah told Khālid: "You killed a Muslim and every night went to bed with his wife; therefore, I swear to God that I will never take part in any battle that you lead!" Then, soon after, he mounted his horse and set out for Medina. Immediately after his arrival, he informed Abu Bakr of what had happened, but he did not pay attention to what he said.

Omar, who was a close friend of Mālik Ibn Nuwayra before Islam, got angry and went to Abu Bakr, forcing him to chastise and kill Khālid for his devilish action. He said: "First you must stone him for committing adultery, and then send him to death for killing innocent people!"

However, Abu Bakr's answer was:

يٰۤهَيۡهَاتُمَا عَمِّرُوۡا نَاوِلُوۡا وَانۡخَلَا، فَارۡفَعۡ لِسَانَكَ عَنۡ خَالِدٍ

"O Omar! Stop saying this about Khālid. He has made a mistake. Do control your tongue!" Omar said: "So if you are not going to kill him, just depose him from his position as army chief!"

Abu Bakr said:

لَا، يٰۤهَيۡهَاتُمَا، لِمَا كُنۡ لَا يَمۡتَنۡ بِسَاۡئِلُهُۥ عَلٰى الْكَافِرِيۡنَ

"Never! I am not going to depose him. I am not such a man as to sheathe the sword that God has commanded to be unsheathed against the disbelievers."

When Khālid returned from the battle, he walked straight into the mosque. He was wearing a rusty-iron-colored suit. And he had stuck several wooden arrows on the sides of his turban cap. Omar stood up and took the arrows from his turban and broke them while saying:

أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ أَمْرًا مُسْلِمًا تَمُوتُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ أَيْدِي اللَّهِ لَا يَجُوزُ بِأَخْبَارِكُمْ

"Do you show off while you have killed a Muslim and had an illicit affair with his wife! By God, I am going to stone you to death."

Khālid kept quiet. He thought that Abu Bakr was also on his side and would say something evil against him. Then some time later, when Abu Bakr and Khālid met, Abu Bakr asked for his excuse, and let him to go, and then gave Omar a heavy command: "Now, O son of the poor and cloak-wearing, come to me. I want to see how brave you are."

In any case, Abu Bakr paid the blood-money for Mālik Ibn Nuwayra from the public treasury. The companions consider this event one of Abu Bakr's verbal attacks, and from several aspects they have considered it one of the unsolvable matters. One may suppose Mālik deserved death for not paying *zakāt*, but what about their wives who were Muslims? Even for disbelieving men who do not pay the *zakāt*, one must have nothing to do with their Muslim wives! As the Qur'an says:

وَلَا تَزِنُوا رِجَالَهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ¹⁰

Supposing Abu Bakr has made an excuse for Khālid's killing Mālik, what is his excuse for capturing their wives and killing his friends? Above all, is it permissible in Islam to take another Muslim's wife illegally and then commit adultery with her?

Therefore, did Omar carry out what he had promised to do? He had sworn to chastise Khālid during the time he was in power, and he had also sworn to return the captured wives and their properties to the companions of Mālik, who were the rightful owners, so he carried out what he had promised. First of all, he returned their properties to them, but did not take his rightful share; and secondly, he gathered their wives from everywhere, such as Syria, and some had been illicitly made pregnant, and then sent them to their Tribe, Banī Tha'labat Ibn Yarbū'. However, Omar did not sentence Mālik to death as he had promised to do.

As a result of this sad incident in Islam, Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah,¹¹ the chief of the Khazraj tribe, from the companions of Medina, after that long dispute in Saqīfa Banī Sā'idah avoided paying allegiance to Abu Bakr, and when Abu Bakr's friends tried to make him swear allegiance to him, Sa'd's son Qays told them: "I am giving you a piece of advice. Please take it seriously." They asked him what his advice was. He said:

Sa'd has decided not to declare loyalty to you, and my father is a man who never breaks his promise, so he will never pay allegiance as long as he is alive. On the other hand, he will not be killed unless all his children and all the members of the tribe are killed along with him. And the tribe of Khazraj will not die unless all the people in the Aws tribe are killed (because both tribes belong to the Anṣār, in the group of the Immigrants). And the tribes of Aws and Khazraj will not die unless all the Yemenis die with them. Therefore, do not ruin your newly set up plan by forcing him to pay homage to you.

Almost all of them paid attention to what he said and then stopped objecting to Sa'd.

However, Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah left Medina for good and never returned there again. He went to Sham and went directly to the countryside of Ghassān, which was in the territory of Damascus and belonged to the tribe of Sa'd.

Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah's leaving Medina raised another problem for the people supporting the caliphate. It was mostly because Ali and all the Banī Hāshim, and many of the Anṣār, had avoided paying homage to the usurper caliph. At that time, Khālīd Ibn Walīd was in Syria. He was well-known for shooting arrows. So while in Sham, he made friends with another man who was also good at shooting arrows. Now, because of Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah's refusal to pay homage to the Quraysh, those two made a decision to kill Sa'd just because of his refusal to pay homage. So hand in hand one night in the pitch darkness, they hid among the dense trees and lay in ambush to kill Sa'd. It was not long before Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah happened to pass through the woods, and both those hiding among the trees jumped out and shot two arrows at him, while reciting a line of elegy of theirs aloud for their enjoyment:

مَنْ كَلَّأَ سَيِّدَ الْخَزْرَجِ سَعْدَ بْنَ عُبَادَةَ وَرَمَيْنَاهُ بِسَهْمَيْنِ فَلَمْ يَنْخُطِ قُلُودَهُ

"We killed the Master of Khazraj, Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah; we just shot at him two arrows, and we did not miss his heart."

Then, on a dark night, they went down into a well in the center of the town and read the same line of elegy together. By doing so,

they wanted to make the people in town think that they were *jinn* and Sa'd was killed by them.

Once, during his caliphate, Omar came across Khālid Ibn Walīd by those dense trees and asked him: "O Khālid, are you not the same murderer of Mālik Ibn Nuwayra?" Khālid answered:

يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِن كُنتُ كُتِلْتُ مَالِكُ بْنُ نُوَيْرَةَ لِمَتَاتٍ كَانَتْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُ صَدٌّ كُلُّ لَكُمْ سَعْدُ بْنُ عُبادَةَ
لِمَتَاتٍ كَانَتْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ

"O Master of the Faithful, I killed Mālik Ibn Nuwayra on account of the long and evil enmity between us. On the other hand, I have killed Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah because of his evil intention towards you!"

Omar was delighted at what he said, so he stood up, embraced Khālid, and kissed his face, saying: "You are the sword of God, and so are you the Prophet's sword."

From then on Omar did not disturb Khālid, because he understood that the murderer of Sa'd Ibn 'Ibādah was Khālid. So his second murder was a good compensation for his first murder of Mālik Ibn Nuwayra. Therefore, he cleared him of his errors and forgave him for his crime. Although at the time Abu Bakr had decided to kill the murderer of Mālik, now he completely changed his opinion and cast into oblivion what had happened in the past.¹²

Right from the beginning, the story of Mālik Ibn Nuwayra's innocence was a serious matter of discussion between the Sunni and Shi'a scholars. It has been mentioned in many books, such as books of theology and history, like *Tārikh al-Ṭabari*, *al-Kāmil* of Ibn Athīr Jazārī, *Rawḍat al-Aḥbāb* of Aṭā'ullāh, *Nihāyat al-'Uqūl* of Fakhr Rāzī, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, *Istī'āb* of 'Abd al-Birr, *ʿIqd al-Farīd* of Ibn 'Abd Rabbah, *al-Mughnī* of Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, the theology books of Taftāzārī, Qūshchī, and Sharīf Jurjānī, Sayyid Murtaḍā in *al-Shāfi*, and 'Allāmah Ḥillī's books, and finally 'Allāmah Majlisī, and so on. And what we have brought together in this book is very little from the fifth criticism of Majlisī to Abu Bakr given in *Bihār al-Anwār*,¹³ with some quotes from *Tārikh al-Ṭabari*.¹⁴

Shaykh Muḥid in *Irshād* says:

There are too many incidents of this kind of unseen knowledge in Imam Ali; they are so many that none of the ignorant people or enemies can deny them. Have you not noticed how many hadiths and how much useful information have been maintained by the scholars about Imam Ali? They have talked enough about him before his battles with the different tribes, and after their paying allegiance to him. He said: "I have

the duty to fight those who avoid paying allegiance, and those who choose the way leading to oppression, and finally those who forsake their religion." He meant the *aṣḥāb Jamāl* (companions of Jamāl), *aṣḥāb Mu'āwiyah* (companions of Mu'āwiyah), and the Khawārij of Nahrawān, whom he fought in the Battles of Jamāl, Šiffin, and Nahrawān. And the case was the same as he had predicted.¹⁵

After swearing allegiance to him, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr asked him to let them leave Medina for the minor *ḥajj* (pilgrimage), but he told them: "By God, you do not intend to go on the minor *ḥajj* (pilgrimage)! you have decided to go to Basra," and it proved to be true.¹⁶

And later, he explained to Ibn 'Abbās concerning their request for permission to leave Medina:

أَتَىٰ أَذِنْتُ لِمَتَامَعَ عَلِيٍّ بِمَا قَدْ انْطَلَقَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ التَّنْذِيرِ وَاسْتَظْهَرْتُ بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَىٰ سَيَرُدُّ كَيْدَهُمَا
وَيُطْفِرُنِي بِهِمَا

"I let both of them to go on a journey, though I knew what trick they were playing; however, I relied on God for victory over them. I have only Him to support me; of course God will overcome their tricks, and He will make me victorious over both of them." And it happened as he had predicted.¹⁷

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

After his first statement, "You have decided to go Basra", in another hadith, he said to them: "Indeed you are about to create a sedition." He also said:

لَقَدْ عَلَا بِوَجْهِ كَاجِرٍ وَخَرَجَا بِوَجْهِ غَالِبٍ، وَلَا
أَقْلَمُ إِلَّا فِي كَيْبَةٍ، وَأَخْلَقُ بِهِمَا أَنْ يُقْتَلَ

"They both came to me with the bad intention to swear allegiance to me for my Imamate, and they left him with the same intention in mind. I will not see them any more until they attack me with a huge army. And the best thing for them is to be killed!"

And it is narrated in the hadiths of Abi al-Haytham Ibn al-Tayyihān and Abdullah Ibn Rāfi' that he told them both:

وَلَقَدْ أَبْذَيْتُ بِأَمْرِكُمَا وَأَنْتَ مَصَارِعُكُمْ. فَتَطَلَّعَا وَهُوَ يَقُولُ، وَمُنَابِتَمَانٍ: فَمَنْ نَحْنُ؟ وَإِنَّمَا هُمَا
عَلَىٰ نَقِيدِهِ¹⁸

"By God, your final outcome has become clear to me, and I have been informed of your falling off [the horse] and being killed [in the

battle!” However, while hearing His Excellency reciting this verse *whoever breaks his covenant, he does so against his loss*, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr did not care; they turned and went away.

Majlisī has narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās from *al-Manāqib*:

تَطَهَّرَ عَلَى مَذْبَحِ الْفِرْقَةِ وَقَتَّلَ مَذْنِيَّ الرَّجُلَيْنِ فِي رِوَايَةٍ: قَتَضَ الْخِزْمَةَ وَلَيَّتْكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ
الْكَوْفَةِ ثَمَانِيَةِ آلَافٍ وَبِخَمْعٍ وَثَلَاثُونَ رَجُلًا.
فَكَانَ كَمَا قَالَ. فِي رِوَايَةٍ: بَيْتَةُ آلَافٍ وَخَمْسَةِ وَثَلَاثِينَ.

“Surely we will overcome this group, and certainly we will kill these two men.” And in another hadith: “Of course you will have victory over Basra; you will have about 8030 more supporters today from Kūfa.” And it happened to be as he had predicted. In another hadith the number of the supporters foretold is 6065.

Shaykh Mufid says:

In the Battle of Siffin, as he remained in a place called Dhīqār to receive people’s homage, he said:

يَأْتِيَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْكَوْفَةِ أَلْفٌ رَجُلٌ لَا يَنْبَغِي دُونَ رَجُلًا وَلَا يَمْضُونَ رَجُلًا يَأْتِي عَنِّي عَلَى الْمَوْتِ

“Now, exactly one thousand men are coming to your aid from Kūfa—no more or less—all of them will pay homage to me and to die and be martyred.”

Ibn ‘Abbās says:

I was a bit anxious about the number he declared. I thought then, what if they are fewer than he predicted! In that case, we will be considered liars! In addition, it was my job to count how many men were there. I was anxious until the men arrived, so I started counting them. I counted them carefully and found out that they were 999. I waited some more, but no more arrived! I was greatly astonished, and it occurred to me to recite “From God we are, and our return is to Him” in order to ease my worries. In the meantime I was whispering: “What was the reason for Ali’s lying?”

All of a sudden, I noticed a man in the distance who was hurriedly coming toward us. When he got closer to us we noticed that he was wearing a woolen mantle and had his own shield and sword with him and a little leather water-skin hanging on his back. He walked straight to Imam Ali, saying: “Please put your hand in mine; I want to pay homage to you.”

Imam Ali said: “Why are you swearing allegiance to me?” He answered: “I swear allegiance to you in order to carry out your command and fight

with those who are fighting against you; I will fight the enemy until I am killed or God brings victory to you."

Imam Ali asked him what his name was. He said it was Oways. He asked: "Are you Oways al-Qaranī?" He answered: "Yes, I am."

Imam Ali stated:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، أَخْبَرَنِي حَبِيبِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّ إِدْرِكَ رَجُلًا مِنْ أُمَّتِي يُقَالُ لَهُ: أَوْسُ الْقُرْنِيِّ، يَكُونُ مِنْ حِزْبِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، يَوْتُ عَلَى الشَّهَادَةِ، يَدْخُلُ فِي شَفَاعَتِهِ مِثْلَ رِبْعَةِ وَمُضَرٍّ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ.

"God is the Greatest! My beloved Prophet of God once told me that I would get to know a man from among his people, that his name was Oways Qaranī, and that he belonged to the party of God and His Prophet! He said that he would be martyred, and that his intercession alone is more acceptable than the intercessions of the two tribes of Rabī'ah and Muḍar."

Ibn 'Abbās said: "I suffered and mourned more at Oways's martyrdom than at the death of the thousand men in the army."¹⁹

Moreover, Shaykh Mufīd says:

Among the unseen knowledge of the Imam is his predication that the people of Syria would raise the Qur'ans on the points of spears, and then, his people would ask His Excellency to make a peace treaty with them!

While predicting the event, he says:

وَنَلَّكُمْ، إِنَّ هَذِهِ غَدِيَّةٌ وَمَا يَرِيدُ الْقَوْمُ الْقُرْآنَ لِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسُوأُ بِأَهْلِ قُرْآنٍ، فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَامْضُوا عَلَى بَصَائِرِكُمْ فِي قَتْلِهِمْ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا انْفَرَقَتْ بِكُمْ السُّبُلُ وَتَدْعُمُ حَيْثُ لَا تَتَفَنُّكُمْ التَّدَامَةُ

Woe unto you! Putting Qur'ans on their spear points and hoisting them is a kind of trick they are playing! This group is not after the Qur'an because they are not the followers of the Qur'an. Therefore, you be wary of God by referring to your insight, make your decision, get on your feet, and fight with them. If you stop fighting with them, they will disperse you and then you will feel remorseful, and your repentance then will have no benefit for you.

The event happened exactly as His Excellency had predicted. His companions rejected his command and became disbelievers. Later on they

regretted not doing what he had commanded them to do. They divided into different groups and were finally killed in a state of regret.²⁰

Further, Shaykh Mufīd says:

When the Imam was going to kill the Khawārij, he said:

لَوْلَا أَنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ تَسْكَبُوا وَتَتْرَكُوا الْعَمَلَ لَا خَيْرَ لَكُمْ بِمَا قَعَصَاءُ عَلَى لِسَانِ نَبِيِّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
فِيْمَنْ قَاتَلَ مَوْلَاءَ الْقَوْمِ مُسْتَبْهَرًا بِضَلَالَتِهِمْ وَإِنْ فِيهِمْ رَجُلٌ لَا مَوْذُونٌ²¹ الْيَدِ، لَهُ كَذِي
كَذِي الْمَرْأَةِ، وَهُمْ شَرُّ الْخَلْقِ وَالْخَلِيقَةِ، وَقَاتِلُهُمْ أَقْرَبُ خَلْقِي إِلَى اللَّهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ.²²

If I was not worried that you would stop fighting all of a sudden and lose hope, I would let you know what God had ordained and announced through His Prophet concerning those who know of these hostile enemies and who are fighting with them. And let it be known to them that there is a man whose fingers are lime-twigs, and his breasts looks like a woman's breasts! They are the worst creatures, and their murderer is closer to God.

At that time, Mukhdaj (the very man whose hand was defective and whose chest had the shape of breasts), who was not famous among the members of the tribe, was seen. When the Khawārij were killed, Imam Ali searched to find him among those who were killed in the battle. He was searching to find him while saying: "By God, I have never lied, nor has anyone lied to me!" He continued his investigation until he found him among those who were murdered. His shirt was torn apart, and on his arm there grew a big lump of flesh, just like the breast of a woman, covered with rough hair! It grew out of his body such that if someone tried to remove his arm, the growth would follow. When Imam Ali found this man, he chanted: "God is the Greatest!" And he added: "This event is a good lesson for the others on following the right path and insight."²³

Majlisi says that Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has narrated:

All the biographers unanimously said that as Ali killed the Khawārij, he did his best to find Dhu al-Thudayyah, the very man with the lime-twigg fingers. Therefore, he searched for him among the dead, but nearly lost hope of finding him. When he could not find his corpse, he said to his men about him: "By God, I have never lied, nor has anyone lied to me; what I have anticipated about him is true, so search until you find him. By God, I am sure he is among the murdered ones." After a long search,

he finally found his corpse. His hand looked like a woman's breast on his chest.²⁴

فَوَزَجِلْ مُخْدَجُ الْيَدِ كَمَا لَتَنِي فِي صَدْرِي

Ibrahim Ibn Dizil has narrated in the book of *Siffin* from A'mash, and he from Zayd Ibn Wahab, that when Imam Ali killed those Khawārij, he said: "Find Dhu al-Thudayyah." His men searched for him. They tried hard and at last found him in a ditch, hidden under some corpses, so they took him to Imam Ali. He was a man whose hands were covered with rough hair, similar to cats' whiskers. He cheered and chanted: "God is the Greatest!" And his followers repeated the same cry after him.²⁵

Further, Muslim Ḍabbī has narrated from Habbat 'Oranī that Dhu al-Thudayyah was a man of dark complexion, and he always smelled bad. One of his hands was like the breast of a woman fixed to his arm, and when someone wanted to grab it, his arm would also follow. It was covered with rough hair just like the whiskers of a cat.²⁶

In *Nihāyah* of Ibn Athīr Jazārī, vol. 4, p. 195, in the entry *Kalb* (dog), Jazārī has explained:

The story of Dhu al-Thudayyah is like that of a dog on whose chest rough hair has grown; it looks as if hair is growing on his fingertips.

When they found him in the battle-field, they chopped off his hand from his body and hung it on the point of a spear. Imam Ali then went on crying: "God spoke the truth, and His prophet predicted it perfectly, so let the people know that." His companions kept repeating this sentence from early morning until sunset, or nearly until sunset.²⁷

Ibn Dizilī has narrated the same:

When they searched excessively to find Mukhdaj, Ali lost his patience and ordered someone to bring the *baghlah* (mule) of the Prophet to him. They did what he commanded. Ali mounted the animal, and it went ahead with some people following him until they found the man they were looking for, and when Ali recognized him, he fell prostrate and gave thanks to God.

Many people have narrated that when Ali asked for the *baghlah* of the Prophet, the Prophet said: "This mule is enough to take us there." His Excellency mounted it, and it took him right to the corpse of Mukhdaj and stopped there, and His Excellency pushed it out from among the other corpses.

‘Awwām Ibn Ḥawshab has narrated from his father and grandfather that Yazīd Ibn Rawīm narrated that he had seen Ali in Nahrawān saying:

[Ali said:] “Today four thousand men from the Khawārij are going to be killed, and one of them is going to be Dhu al-Thudayyah.”

When he was killing those people with the spear, I was following him. He commanded me to cut four thousand stalks of bamboo (and then while mounting the mule again, he told me to lay a bamboo stalk on each corpse).²⁸ I did what he said, and then I took the lead, and wherever I noticed a corpse, I dropped a bamboo stalk on it. All that time Ali was following on the mule, along with some people who had joined us. The bamboo stalks had run out except the last one in my hand.

I looked Ali in the face and noticed that he was greatly surprised and his complexion looked pale. It was not long before I came upon the corpse of Dhu al-Thudayyah. Upon seeing it, Ali then shouted the cry: “God is the Greatest.” Next he fell prostrate before God, with the people all about chanting: “God is the Greatest.”²⁹

Shaykh Mufid has narrated that the narrators have written about Jundub Ibn Abdullah saying:

I was in the presence of Ali in the Battles of Jamāl and Ṣiffīn, and he did not need me to fight his enemy along with him until we reached Nahrawān. There, I doubted whether I should fight with the enemies or still wait; I considered whether it would be right to fight with those who read and support the Qur’an; they are exactly what we desire to be. “So it is a great mistake,” I thought!

Early the next morning I left their army and set out aimlessly with my small leather water-skin with me. I stopped some distance away, and I thrust my spear-point into the earth and hung my shield on the other end. In this way I made a small area of shade to rest in for a while. I was sitting in the shade when I saw Imam Ali come to me asking: “O my brother Azdī, have you any water with you to make an ablution with?” I answered: “Yes, I have,” and I handed him the small leather water-skin of mine.

He took the water and walked so far away from me that I could not see him any more, but it was not long before he returned to me after performing ablution and sat next to me in the shade. We saw a horseman coming to us in a hurry, and he said to Imam Ali:

قَدْ عَبرَ الْقَوْمُ إِلَيْهِمْ وَقَدْ قَطَعُوا النَّهْرَ

"The army has crossed the river, and now the tribe of Nahrawān is on the other side of the river."

Imam Ali said: "Not at all! It is absolutely not as you say. They have not crossed the river." Once more the horseman said: "By God, they have crossed it." He again said: "It is as I told you; no one has crossed the river." In the meantime another man came on horseback and said:

يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَدْ عَبَرَ الْقَوْمُ

"O Master of the Faithful, the army has really crossed the river." He replied: "Not at all! It is absolutely not as you say. They have not crossed the river."

The man said: "By God, I have not come to you for nothing, because I have seen them cross the river with all their equipment and banners with them."

He told him assuredly:

وَاللَّهِ مَا صَلُّوا وَإِنَّهُ لَنَصْرُكُمْ وَمَهْمَاءُ دِمَائِهِمْ

"By God, they have not crossed the river, because they will be killed and fall off their horses on this side of the river."

Imam Ali said nothing more. He stood up and so did I. Meanwhile I was thinking and saying inwardly:

Praise be to God Who gave me the insight to come to know the fact and accompany such an intelligent man. This man certainly possesses one of these two attributes: he is either a liar and invents things to beguile people, or he is a divine man with certain signs and proofs from God, and his covenant is from the Prophet. O God, I make such a covenant with You that, on the Day of Judgment, do not take me to task for what I did unknowingly. I promise You that if I find that those men in the tribe have crossed the river, I will be the first man to pierce their eyes with the point of my spear. And if I find that they have not crossed the river, then I will remain firm to fight them.

When we got closer to the lines of the army, I found out that what Ali had said was correct. They had not crossed the river, and all their equipment was with them, and it was as Ali had predicted. At that moment, Imam Ali touched my shoulder and said: "O my brother Azdī, now is everything clear to you?" I answered: "Yes, O Master of the Faithful." Ali said: "Now your duty is to fight your enemy." So I started fighting. I killed the first enemy, and then went to the second one and killed him as well. Next, I fought with the third one. He was stronger, and we challenged each other until both of us fell from our horses. Right then, my

friend came to my aid. I was unconscious and they dragged me away from the battlefield. Some time later, when I came around, I found that the battle had come to an end, and Ali was free from fighting with those people.

At the bottom of the related page, Shaykh Mufid says that this is a famous hadith among the narrators and the historians. It happened to Jundub Ibn Abdullah, who had narrated it even at the time of Imam Ali as well as after his martyrdom. No one has ever objected to it or rejected its correctness. In this hadith, you can see the unseen knowledge of his; it is so clear and miraculous that nothing can hide it.³⁰

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has explained this hadith with all the specific details in it, and Majlisī has explained it in his work, and it is in this hadith that Jundub says: "I heard some people in the army of Nahrawān quietly reciting the Qur'an, like bees buzzing; and in that army were men wearing bronze helmets." Bronze helmets are head-coverings that chiefs, nobles, and shaykhs used to wear.

It is in this hadith that he said: "The Nahrawāns' blood is shed on this side of the river." There is in another hadith that he had said:

لَا يَلْتَقُونَ إِلَى قَصْرِ بُرَى بِنْتِ كَسْرَى³¹

"They will not reach the Palace of Kasrā's daughter, Būrā."

In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sayyid Raḍī says:

As Imam Ali set out to fight the Khawārij, and he had already been informed that the army had crossed the river to the other side, he said:

مَصَارِعُهُمْ دُونَ الثُّكَلَةِ وَاللَّهِ لَا يَقِلُّ مِنْهُمْ عَشْرَةٌ، وَلَا يَهْلِكُ مِنْكُمْ عَشْرَةٌ³²

"Their place of execution is on this side of the river. By God, there will remain no more than 10 among them; however, not even 10 of you will be killed."

Sayyid Raḍī adds: "Here the term *al-nuṭfa* means water. We have already discussed the content of this hadith."

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadid has mentioned: "This news is of those very well known hadiths, and since it is wide-spread, people always narrate it orally among themselves. It is related to the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali."

Then he says:

There are two types of news. The first one is brief and ordinary, and it is used in conversation among the people, such as when a man says to his

friends: "Tomorrow, you will receive some help and will then overcome the enemy you are fighting," so when the next day he overcomes the enemy and attains victory, he assumes it to be a proof and a miracle; but if he does not overcome the enemy and attains no victory, the man says to him: "You have changed your decision and have doubted what I told you already; that is why God has ceased assisting you." Now you see it is a common rhetorical change of the words that takes place in daily conversation.

However, a specific prediction removes the curtain from an absolute secret, just as this speech of Ali, which leaves no room for doubt. He was aware of the number of the soldiers in his army as well as in the army of the enemy, and he announced the exact number of both armies before and after the battle. When the battle ended, it became clear that the dead and living were exactly the number he had said before the battle.

It is obvious that this event is a divine affair, which was known by the Prophet, and the Prophet knew it from the Glorious God, and other people are powerless to receive such knowledge. Accordingly, the unseen knowledge was bestowed on Imam Ali, and not a single ordinary man is competent to receive it. This has caused some sects to exaggerate greatly about Ali and take him to have the Essence of the Divine transmitted into his soul, as Christians have assumed of Jesus.

The Prophet had informed him of this affair and said:

يَكُونُ فِيكَ رَجُلَانِ: مُحِبٌّ غَالٍ وَمُبْغِضٌ قَاتِلٌ

"Two different groups of people will be killed for your sake; one of the groups is of those who love you, but who exaggerate about you, and the second one is the group of vengeful enemies who fight against you."

On another occasion he said:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَوْ لَا أَنِي أَشْفِقُ أَنْ يَقُولَ كَوَائِفُ مَنْ أَمَنِي فِيكَ مَا قَالَتِ النَّصَارَى فِي ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ، لَكُنْتُ الْيَوْمَ فِيكَ مَقَالًا، لَا تُؤْمَرُ بِمَلَاءٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِلَّا أَخَذُوا الثَّرَابَ مِنْ حَتِّ قَدَمَيْكَ لِلْبَرَكَةِ³³

"By God Who has my soul in His hand, if I was not worried that some of my nation would speak ill in your absence, and say such words about you as the Christians say about the son of Mary, I would let them know something about you such that they would never encounter you without falling in prostration in front of you."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb in *al-Ibāna* has quoted Ibn Baṭṭah, and Abu Dāwūd in *Sunan* from Abu Mijlad, along with other matters, has narrated concerning the Khawārij that Imam Ali said to his companions: "By God, not even 10 persons will be killed among you."

In a separate hadith he also says:

وَلَا يَنْقُذُ مِنْهُمْ عَشْرَةٌ وَلَا يَهْلِكُ مِنْكُمْ عَشْرَةٌ

"There will not be saved even ten persons from among them, and from us, there will not be killed even ten men." Now nine out of ten of his companions were killed, and on the Nahrawān side, nine soldiers were alive. Two of them went to Sistān, two to Ommān, two to Jazīrah, two to Yemen, and one to Mawzan.³⁴ The tribe of Khawārij, which has settled there, has grown from them.

Those who were killed from among the companions of Imam Ali were Ruwaybat Ibn Wabar 'Ajli, Sa'd Ibn Khālid Sabī'i, Abdullah Ibn Hammād Arhabī, Fayyād Ibn Khalīl Azdī, Kaysun Ibn Salma Jahanī, 'Ubayd Ibn 'Ubayd Khawlānī, Jamī' Ibn Jasham Kindī, and Ḍabb Ibn 'Asim Asadī.³⁵

The sermons in *Nahj al-Balāghah* that speak of the unseen knowledge are numerous. One them is as follows:

أَمَّا هَذِهِ، أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، فَأَنَا هَاهُنَا عَيْنُ الْيَقِينَةِ، وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لِحُجْرَائِهَا أَحَدٌ غَيْرِي يَهْدِي بِهَا مَنَاجِيعَ نَجَاتِهَا، وَاشْتَدَّ كَلْبُهَا. فَكَيْسَ لَوْ أَنَّ تَقَعُّدِي عَنْ قَوْلِ الَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا تَسْأَلُونِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ فِيهَا يَبْدُو كُمْ وَبَيْنَ الشَّاعَةِ، وَلَا عَنْ هَذِهِ تَهْدِي مَانَةً وَتُخِلُّ مَانَةً إِلَّا أَبْشَرْتُكُمْ بِنَاجِيَتِهَا وَقَدْ بَدَا³⁶ وَسَاقِيَتُهَا وَمَنَاجِيعَ رِكَابِهَا وَتَحَطَّرَ رَحْلُهَا وَمَنْ يَقْتُلُ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا قَاتِلًا، وَيَمُوتُ مِنْهُمْ مَوْتًا.

وَلَوْ قَدْ هَدَيْتُنِي وَتَوَلَّيْتُكُمْ كَمَا كَرِهَ الْأُمُورُ، وَخَوَّابِ الْمَخْطُوبِ، لَا طَرِيقَ كَثِيرٍ مِنَ السَّائِلِينَ وَفِيلٍ كَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْمُسْتَوِيرِينَ. وَذَلِكَ إِذَا قَلَصْتُ عَنْكُمْ وَفُتِرْتُ عَنْ سَائِي، وَصَافَتِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَيْكُمْ ضَيْقًا فَتَسْطِيلُونَ مَتَاعَ الْإِهْلَاءِ عَلَيْكُمْ حَتَّى يَقْتُلَ اللَّهُ لِيَقْتُلَ الْأَرْبَابَ مِنْكُمْ. إِنَّ الْيَقِينَ إِذَا أَفْطَلَتْ شَيْئًا وَإِذَا أَذْهَبَتْ شَيْئًا، يَنْكُزُ مَقْبَلًا وَيُخْرِجُ مُدْبِرًا، وَبَيْنَ حَيْزِ الرِّجَالِ، يُصِيبُ بَلَدًا وَمُخْطَلِنَ بَلَدًا.

إِلَّا إِنْ أَخُوْتُ الْيَقِينَ عِنْدِي عَلَيْكُمْ هَذِهِ بِي أُمِّيَّةٍ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَمِيَاءَ مُطْلَمَةً عَمَتْ خُطْمُهَا وَخَصَتْ بِلِسْمِهَا وَأَصَابَ الْإِهْلَاءَ مَنْ أَبْصَرَ فِيهَا، وَأَخْطَأَ الْإِهْلَاءَ مَنْ عَمِيَ عَنْهَا. وَأَمَّا اللَّهُ لِيَصْدُنَّ بِي أُمِّيَّةٌ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَابَ سُوهُ كَالْأَبْشَرِ تَقْدِيمُ بِفِيهَا وَتَحْبِطُ يَدَاهُ وَتَرْتِنُ بِرِجْلَيْهَا وَتَمْتَعُ دَرْقًا. لَا يَزَالُونَ بِكُمْ حَتَّى لَا يَزُكُوا مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا أَصْلَهُمْ أَوْ غَيْرَ صَائِرٍ بِهِمْ. وَلَا يَزَالُ يَلَاؤُهُمْ حَتَّى لَا يَكُونَ اتِّصَالُ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا كَاتِبُ الْبُيُوتِ مِنَ الْمُهَنْدِينَ، وَالصَّاحِبُ مِنْ مُسْتَحْبَبِهِ يَرُدُّ عَلَيْكُمْ قَتْلَهُمْ سَوْهَاءَ تَحْذِيرَةٍ وَفُطْلًا جَاهِلِيَّةٍ لَيْسَ فِيهَا مَنَازِلُ هُدًى، وَلَا تَعْلَمُ بَرَى.

مَنْ أَهْلُ الْيَتِيمِ مِنْهَا بِجَاهٍ وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا بِدَعَايَ ثُمَّ يَقْرَأُهَا اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ كَفَرِيحِ الْأَدِيمِ بَيْنَ كَوْنِهِمْ عَنَاءٌ
وَكَوْنُهُمْ عَنَاءٌ، وَتَقْبَلُهُمْ بِكَاسٍ مُصَبَّرَةٍ، لَا يَطْبِئُهُمْ إِلَّا الْيَتِيمُ وَلَا يَجْلِسُهُمْ إِلَّا الْتَوَنُّفُ
فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ تَوَدُّقُ نَشِ بِالْثِيَابِ وَالْوَرَقِ مَقَامًا وَاحِدًا وَلَوْ قَدَّرَ جَزْدُ جَزْدٍ لِأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِمْ مَا
أَطْلَبَ الْيَوْمَ بَعَثَهُ فَلَا يَطْغَوْنِي.³⁷

So now, praise and eulogy be to God, O people, I have suppressed the revolt. No one except me advanced towards it when its gloom was growing and its madness was intense. Ask me before you miss me [before I die], because by God, Who has my life in His hands, if you ask me anything between now and the Day of Judgment or about the group who would guide a hundred people and also misguide a hundred people, I would tell you who is announcing its march, who is driving it in the front, and who is driving it at the rear, the stages where its riding animals will stop for rest and the final place of stay, and who among them will be killed and who will die a natural death.

When I am dead, hard circumstances and distressing events will befall, and many persons in the position of asking questions will remain silent with downcast eyes, while those in the position of replying will lose courage. This will be at a time when wars will descend upon you with all hardship and days will be so hard on you that you will feel them prolonged because of hardship until God gives victory to those remaining virtuous among you.

When mischiefs come, they confuse [right with wrong], and when they clear away, they leave a warning. They cannot be known at the time of approach, but are recognized at the time of return. They blow like the blowing of winds, striking some cities and missing others.

Beware! The worst mischief for you in my view is the mischief of the Banī Umayyad, because it is blind and also creates darkness. Its sway is general, but its ill effects are for particular people. He who remains clear-sighted in it will be affected by distress, and he who remains blind in it will avoid distress. By God, you will find the Banī Umayyad after me the worst people for yourselves, like the old unruly she-camel who bites with its mouth, beats with its forelegs, kicks with its hind legs, and refuses to be milked. They will remain over you until they leave among you only those who benefit them or those who do not harm them. Their calamity will continue until your seeking help from them becomes like the seeking of help by the slave from his master or of the follower from the leader.

Their mischief will come to you like evil-eyed fear of the pre-Islamics and fragments of dark clouds with water, wherein there will be no

minaret of guidance nor any sign [of salvation] to be seen. We *Ahl al-Bayt* [the Household of the Prophet] are free from this mischief³⁸ and we are not among those who would engender it. Thereafter, God will dispel it from you like the removal of the skin [from flesh] through him who humbles them, drags them by their necks, makes them drink full cups [of hardships], does not extend to them anything but the sword, and does not clothe them save with fear. At that time, the Quraysh will wish at the cost of the world and all its contents to find me even only once and just for the duration of the slaughter of a camel in order that I may accept from them [the whole of] that of which at present I am asking only a part, but that they are not giving me.³⁹

While explaining the sermon, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd says:

Imam Ali says: "And no one dared to stand against the companions of Jamāl and Nahrawān as I did." It is because almost all the people were scared to fight with the people of *Qibla* [religion]; they did not know how to fight with them. They did not know whether to follow one who escaped from the battle-field or fell behind or not, or to kill the wounded ones among the enemies or not! And they had no knowledge of how to divide the booty in the battle! The Muslims believed it was too much to fight with those whose prayers, and whose call to prayer, were exactly similar to our prayers, and to our calls to prayer. They also thought it was wrong to fight with ʿĀyisha, Ṭalḥa, and Zubayr, and as they had power in Islam, some people like Ḥnāf Ibn Qays and some others stopped fighting the enemies. In such a situation, if Ali did not dare to fight them, no one could resist the enemies.

Then Ali says: "Do ask me whatever you want before I pass away." The author of the book *Istīʿāb*, Abu Omar Muhammad Ibn ʿAbd al-Birr, has narrated from some historians and narrators saying: "Not one of the companions of the Prophet said 'Do ask me before I pass away,' but only Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib did."

Shaykh Abu Jaʿfar Iskāfi has narrated in the book *Naqd Uth-māniya*, quoting Ali Ibn Jaʿd from Ibn Shubrama who said:

لَيْسَ لِأَحَدٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ يَقُولَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ: سَلُونِي، إِلَّا عَلِيٌّ، مِنْ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

"No one on the pulpit said 'Do ask me' Ibn except Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib."

Then Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd put forward a new discussion concerning the unseen knowledge of which Imam had informed them, and it runs like this: "Know that in this section, the Imam has sworn to God that whatever people asked him about their problems, he would inform them of the events' occurrence until the Day of Resurrection."

He informed people collectively about what would happen to them or what they would encounter on their way, and he informed them if they asked him about anything concerning their leaders, their followers, where they kept their animals, and where they let their camels rest, whether they were going to be killed or would die a natural death, and when and where their deaths would happen.

By these predictions, he did not claim to be a divine man or a prophet. He confessed that the Prophet had transmitted such knowledge to him.

We have tested all the narrations of Ali and found them to be true, and following them, we have reasoned to the truth of his claims, such as his prediction that he would be stricken with a sword and be martyred.

He had foreknowledge about the martyrdom of his son, Husayn, and all that he would happen to him in Karbalā. He predicted it when he was passing from that area.

He also had information about the government of Mu'āwīyah after his demise, and gave information to the people about Hajjāj Ibn Yūsuf Thaqafi and Yūsuf Ibn Omar, as well as information about the affairs of the Khawārij in Nahrawān.

Also, he gave information to his companions about which one would be killed by the enemy and which one was going to be hanged, and also predictions about the battles with the Nākihīn, Qāsiṭīn, and Māriqīn, and he possessed information about the size of the army that would come to him from Kūfa, and that he would set out towards Basra to fight.

Similarly, he had news about Abdullah Ibn Zubayr and gave a statement concerning him:

حَبِيبٌ،⁴⁰ يَرُومُ أَمْرًا وَلَا يَنْزِرُهُ، يَحْسِبُ جَالَةَ الدِّينِ لَا ضَعْفَادِ الدُّنْيَا، وَهُوَ مُضْلُوبٌ قُرَيْشٍ.

"He is a cunning man and a cheat as well as jealous. He always wants to deceive people. He claims he will get into the government but never succeeds. He has taken the religion as a means to get this world into his hands. In the end he will be hanged by the Quraysh."

Similar is another item of prediction informing the people that the citizens of Basra would drown and die (it would happen because of the Zanzibarians—the Negroes—attacking them); this is why some people have altered the title of the *Zanj* (the Negroes) to *riḥ* (wind).

And similar is his news of the appearance of black flags from Khurasan, when he made it clear that they were a group of the people of Khurasan who were of the offspring of Muṣ'ab and Ṭāhir Ibn

Husayn, and that his sons were also were from them. They were all of those who were inviting people to the government of Banī ‘Abbās.

Similar to his above predictions was his prediction that after him, some leaders from his offspring would turn up in Ṭabaristān, such as Dā‘ī, Nāṣir, and some others, and he made this statement concerning them:

وَأَنَّ لَأَلٍ مُحَمَّدٍ بِالتَّالِقَانِ لَكَزَّرَ سَيَطُورُهُ إِذَا شَاءَ. دُعَاؤُهُ حَقٌّ، يَتَّوَمُّ بِأَنِّهِ اللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دِينِ اللَّهِ

“And indeed there is a treasure (a noble one) from the offspring of Muhammad in Ṭālqān that God will unveil in the future; He will do as He wills. His invitation will be right, and he will invite people to the straight path by the permission of God.”

Similarly there was his prediction about the time of death of Muhammad Nafs Zakīyya in Medina, and his prediction about him was: “He will be killed at a place called Ahjār al-Zayt.”

And similarly there was his prediction about Ibrahim, the brother of Muhammad Nafs Zakīyya, that he would be killed at the Bāb al-Ḥamzah: “He will be killed soon after his appearance, and will be attacked after he attacks.”

There were also some other predictions about Ibrahim:

يَلْبِيهِ سَهْمٌ غَرْبٌ يَكُونُ فِيهِ نَيْبَةٌ يَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْهَا، سَلَّتْ بِدَعْوَةٍ وَوَمَنْ عَصُدُ

“An arrow will fly at him but it will not be clear who targeted him, and he will die by that single arrow. So let the arrow shooter be cursed; may his hands become loose and useless!”

There was his prediction concerning the death of Wajj,⁴¹ and his statement about those who were chosen by the townspeople.

There was his information concerning the establishment of a country and the government of ‘Alawīyyin in Maghrib, and the mention of Katāma, who were the same ones who had helped Abu Abdullah Dā‘ī Mu‘allim. Similarly, there was the statement he made while pointing at Abu Abdullah Mahdi:

وَهُوَ أَوَّلُهُمْ ثُمَّ صَاحِبُ الْفَيْرِ وَأَنْ ذُو النَّسَبِ الْخَصِ، التَّخَبُّ مِنْ سُلَالَةِ ذِي الْهَدَاءِ الْمُنَجَّى بِالزَّهَاءِ.

“And he is the first one of them who is going to turn up. His skin will be white and his nature pure—not contaminated yet—and he will be the offspring of one who has trained him and dressed with a mantle.”

It was because Ubaydallah Mahdi’s body was white, mixed with the light red of the hair on his body. He was a fair-skinned man and always fresh. Here the term *Dhu al-Badā’* stands for Ismā‘īl Ibn Ja‘far Ibn Muhammad, and he was honored to wear the mantle, because when his father, Imam Ṣādiq, passed away, he laid his mantle over

his corpse, and then called some great men and Shi'a scholars to witness that his father had died, and they would not doubt his Imamate after his father.

There was his prediction about the Sultans of Āl-Būya (the sons of Būya) and his statement about them:

وَيَخْرُجُ مِنْ ذَيْلَمَانَ بَنُو السَّيَّادِ

"And the sons of Şayyād will come from Daylamān."

This statement refers to the sons, because their father's business was catching fish, and with the little money he earned, he managed his family life. Almighty God blessed him with three sons,⁴³ and all became sultans of the Āl-Būya dynasty. He increased their offspring so that they became very famous in ruling the country and caring for the nation.

Another prediction of Ali is:

لَمْ يَسْتَفْرِى أَمْرُهُمْ حَتَّى يَمْلِكُوا الزُّوْءَاءَ وَيَمْلَأُوا الْخَلْفَاءَ.

"They will make progress, will expand their government so much that they will depose the caliphs in Baghdad and take its control in their hands." At this very moment, a man asked His Excellency: "O Imam Ali, how long will their government last?" He answered: "A hundred years or a bit more."

And there was his prediction :

وَالْمَرْبُ إِنُّ الْإِجْدَمِ يَقْتُلُهُ ابْنُ عَمِّهِ عَلَى دِجْلَةٍ

"And the lavish debauched man, the son of the man with the chopped hand whom his brother's son will kill on the river Tigris." This saying of Ali refers to Izz al-Dawlah Bakhtiyār, the son of Mu'izz al-Dawlah Abu al-Husayn, because the hand of Mu'izz al-Dawlah was chopped off, because he was not taking part in the battle. Izz al-Dawlah Bakhtiyār was a delicately brought up man who was after pleasure. Izzu al-Dawlah Fannā Khusrow, his cousin, at the time of *jihād*, was also killed in his palace, and his government was taken away.

If one were to ask: why do people exaggerate about Imam Ali and take him to be a divine being, because they have been informed about his unseen knowledge, whereas they have not exaggerated about the Prophet, and have not taken him as divine? In the beginning, the unseen knowledge was given by him, and almost all the people had heard it and were certain about such knowledge of his. Moreover, the Prophet was foremost in possession of spirituality, because it was he who was the main basis for Islam; his miracles were many and he possessed divine knowledge!

The answer would be: those who were the companions of the Prophet and witnessed his miracles, as well as noticed his unseen knowledge, were those whose knowledge of the Prophet was perfect, because they had seen him and his miracles with their own eyes. Therefore, just being by the Prophet's side and seeing his unseen knowledge and miracles made them understanding people; whereas that is not the case with those of weak intelligence and weak understanding who had seen Imam Ali towards the end of his life, such as Abdullah Ibn Şabāh and his companions. Hence it is not surprising that such people, when they heard about the miracles, become light-headed. It is said that such people believe that the Divine Spirit inhered in him because they believed that such miracles cannot be realized by humans except through divine inhering.

It has been said that some of these people were Jews and Christians who had heard the story from their fathers and the last generations. They believed in the supernatural acts of Imam Ali in the same way that they believed in their own messengers.

Also, these kinds of claims might have been made by a group of unbelievers who were trying to make trouble, to distort Islam and cause differences among the people, and the easiest thing to do was to concoct and follow such a belief. Suppose this group existed at the time of the Prophet; they would certainly promote this wrong belief and spread it among the Muslims, and create doubt about the new religion, Islam. There were not such ill-intentioned people among the companions of the Prophet. It seems that there are a group of hypocrites and *zanādiqah* who attempted to damage the reputation of Islam by such exaggerations.

Now, what I have gathered so far about the differences between these two groups, and among the Arabs living at the time of the Prophet, is that this group was from Iraq and the settlers of Kūfa, and we know that there were many different groups and tribes living in Iraq. On the other hand, some groups of people of Iraq were men of reflection and always had different opinions about religion and politics. Some of them were like Mānī, Dayṣān, and Mazdak, who lived at the time of the government of Akāsirah.

However, the land of Hījāz is different, and its nature is not like that of Iraq; nor do its people think as the Iraqis do. That which dominates the people of Hījāz is their stubbornness and tough characters. But the Hījāzī Arabs now living in Mecca and Medina are completely changed and live in harmony with the people there. So far, there has not been any intelligent person, a sage or a politician or even an orator or writer, among the newcomers of Hījāz. On this basis, we find

that those people exaggerated about Ali when Ali was living in Iraq, but not when he was living in Medina, when everybody was able to know him closely.

On this subject, Ibn Abi al-Hadid, after explaining about different matters, writes on the statement of Imam Ali concerning the fall of the government of Banī Umayyad. It is said that this news of Ali is information of the appearance of the group of the Dressed-in-Black (*Siyāh Pūshān*), and the fall of the government of Banī Umayyad. It happened as Ali had predicted. His statement concerning the Quraysh also happened exactly as he had predicted, because all the narrators have confirmed that Marwān Ibn Muhammad (Marwān Ḥimār, the last Ummayyad, the government usurper), on the day of Zāb,⁴⁴ when he caught sight of Abdullah Ibn Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās in the army of the opposite side, said:

لَوَدِدْتُ أَنَّ عَلِيَّ بْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ نَحَتَ هَذِهِ الزَّاهِدَةَ بَدَلًا مِنْ هَذَا الصَّقِ.

“Instead of this young man, I would like Ali to carry this banner of the battle.”

Some narrators have written the sermon below. It is one of the famous sermons that Ali delivered after the Battle of Nahrawān. There are some sections in this sermon that Sayyid Raḍī has not mentioned, and one of them is:

وَلَا يَكُنْ لِعَمْرِي عَلَيَّامَا غَيْرِي وَلَوْ لَزَأْتُكَ فِيكُمْ مَا قُوِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْحَمَلِ وَالْفَهْرَانِ. وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ
لَوْ أَنَّ تَكَلَّمُوا أَكْتَدَعُوا الْحَمَلُ تَحْتَهُمْ بِمَا قَسَى اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَى لِسَانِ نَبِيِّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَكَلَّمَهُمْ مِنْ بَصِيرَةِ إِصْلَاحِهِمْ، عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ الَّذِي نَحْنُ عَلَيْهِ سَلَوْنِي قَوْلَ أَنْ
تَقْتُلُونِي، فَإِنِّي مَيِّتٌ عَنْ قَرِيبٍ أَوْ مَقْتُولٌ بَلْ كَلَّا، مَا يَنْقُطِرُ انْقِلَابًا أَنْ يَحْتَسِبَ هَذِهِ يَدِي وَضَرْبَ
يَدِي إِلَى يَدِي

And except me, no one dared to stand on his feet and repel the sedition. If I were not among you, no one could rise and fight with the companions of the Battles of Jamāl (the Camel) and Nahrawān. By God, if you did not support them, I would let you know what Almighty God had honored his Prophet to say, and had signed its command, about those who fight without discrimination; they fight them while knowing what ranks and positions God has assigned for them. Do ask me before you lose me, because I will die before long or be martyred! It is probable that I will be killed. O miserable people, for whom are you waiting who will dye this beard of mine with blood!

While saying this part, he touched his beard.

Further, one of his predications is this item, related to the Banī Umayyad:

يَظْهَرُ أَهْلُ بَاطِلِهَا عَلَى أَهْلِ حَقِّهَا، حَتَّى يَمْلَأَ الْأَرْضَ عُذْوَاتًا وَظُلُمَاتٍ وَيَدْعَا إِلَى أَنْ يَبْسُغَ اللَّهُ عَزَّو
جَلَّ جَبْرُوتَهَا، وَيَكْسِرَ عِمَدَهَا، وَيَنْزِعَ أَوْدَانَهَا، أَلَا وَإِنَّكُمْ مُذْرِكُوهَا، فَاصْرُوا قَوْمًا كَانُوا
أَصْحَابَ رَايَاتٍ بَذَرُوا خُتْبَيْنِ، وَلَا تَمْلَأُوا عَلَيَّكُمْ عُذْوُهُمْ، فَكُفِّرْ عَنَّا الْبَلِيَّةَ وَنَحْمِلْ بِكُمْ الثَّقَمَةَ

The vanities among the nation will overcome the rightful ones and spread enmity and oppression. It will continue until the Almighty God lets His wrath fall upon them, breaks their strongholds, and finally ruins them. Beware, you will surely understand that moment, so do support those who are the bearers of the banners of Badr and Hunayn, and God will reward you for that. Be careful not to assist them in overcoming their enemies, and do not associate with them, for they will destroy you and then you will face adversity!

In another place, he says:

إِلَّا مِثْلَ انْصَارِ الصَّهْبِ مِنْ مَوْلَاهُ، إِذَا رَأَاهُ اطَاعَهُ، وَإِنْ نَوَازَى عَنْهُ شَتَمَهُ وَإِنَّمِ اللَّهُ لَوْ فَرَّقَ بَيْنَ كُلِّ حَجَرٍ
تَجَمَّعَ اللَّهُ لِيُشْرِكَ بِهِمْ.

"Your victory over them during the government of the Banī Umayyad is like a slave's victory over his master; when he is in the presence of his master, he obeys him, but he will curse him when he is away from him. By God, if the Banī Umayyad disperse you, and every one of you hides behind a rock, God will bring you together on the day He has decided to destroy them."

He then continued:

فَانظُرُوا أَهْلَ بَيْتِ نَبِيِّكُمْ، إِنْ لَبَدُوا فَأَلْبُدُوا وَإِنْ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فَاصْرُوهُمْ، فَلْيَفْرِجْ اللَّهُ أَلَمَتَهُ
بِرَجُلٍ مِمَّا أَهْوَى الْبَيْتِ، بِأَبِي إِبْنِ خَبِيَّةٍ الْإِمَاءِ، لَا يَهْطِلُ عَلَيْهِمُ إِلَّا الشَّيْطَانُ هَزَّ جَاهُ رَجُلًا، مَوْضِعًا عَلَى
عَاتِقِهِ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَشْهُرٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَ قَرْنَشُ، لَوْ كَانَ هَذَا مِنْ وَلَدِ قَاطِمَةَ لَرَمَيْتُمَا. يُخْزِيهِ اللَّهُ بِبَيْتِ أُمِّيَةٍ حَتَّى
يَجْعَلَهُمْ حُكَّامًا وَرُفَاةً، مَلْعُونِينَ أَنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ أَغْنُوا أَعْدَاؤَكُمْ وَكُفُّوا أَنْتُمْ فِي اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَّوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَ
لَنْ يَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا⁴⁵

So look at the Household of your Prophet. If they linger about, you too linger in the same way; and if they ask you for your assistance, do help them. Certainly God will remove sedition from us by means of a man

among the Household. May my father be made a sacrifice to the son of the chosen maid who will give them the swords to kill them. He will carry the sword with him for eight months and kill so many of the enemy that at last the Quraysh will say: "If this man were of the children of Fāṭimah, he would really be merciful to us!" God will raise him up to kill the Banī Umayyad, and he will kill and destroy the Banī Umayyad in great numbers and finally cut them into pieces! The Banī Umayyad are always cursed by God and they are removed from His mercy. Wherever they are seen, they will be killed out of mercy. This is God's law about those who have already come to this world and passed away; their way of life was the same; you will never see the law of God changed!

If you ask why he said: "If I were not alongside you, none of you would have dared to fight the people of Jamāl and Nahrawān," but he did not include the people of Ṣiffin, this question has been answered as follows: the doubt regarding the people of Jamāl and Nahrawān was due to the confusion between right and wrong of the people who were involved in this battle; Ṭalḥa and Zubayr were promised a place in the Heaven [by the Prophet], and 'Āyisha was the wife of the Prophet. The case of Ṭalḥa and Zubayr in Islam and their immigrating from Mecca to Medina was clear to everyone. On the other hand, 'Āyisha's affection toward the Prophet, and the revelation of a verse of the Qur'an for her sake (about the event of Ifk), is well known.⁴⁶

One may ask: what was the purpose of Imam Ali in saying: "May my father be sacrificed, who is that slave maid among the maids? Who is that appointed man?"? The answer is: the Imamis believe that he is the twelfth Imam, and he is the son of a maid whose name is Narjis. However, some believe that he is one of Fāṭimah's sons who will be born in the future from Umm Walid (a maid who by having intercourse with her master has given birth to a child), and he is not born now.

If it is said: who will be alive from the people of Banī Umayyad at that time, and who will be the men that the Holy Imam is going to take revenge upon? And who are those who like Ali will be in authority over them?

To their question, it has been said that the Imamis believe in the Return, and they believe that a group of Banī Umayyad and some others will return to this world in their original external beings. It will be when their Expected Imam reappears. He will take revenge on the aggressors, and he will deal with them in such a way as to teach good lessons to the next generations. He will be the best son, as is clear through this hadith and similar ones. His name will be Muhammad,

the same as the Prophet's. His time of manifestation will be when there are some Banī Umayyad governing the lands of some Muslims; he is the very Sufyān that has been promised.

He will be of the offspring of Abi Sufyān Ibn Umayyad, and the Shi'a Imam will kill him and his followers—either they will be from the Banī Umayyad or from other tribes. On that occasion Jesus will descend from Heaven, and the signs of the resurrection will become apparent. Dabbat al-Ard [the beast coming forth from the earth as the sign of Judgment Day] will be apparent, the trumpet will be blown, and the dead will rise from their graves—as the Book informs man as well.

Suppose it is said: earlier you said, the man of the Banī Umayyad's death will be at the hands of Saffāh, his uncle Abdullah Ibn Ali, and those who dress in black with black flags in their hands, but what you are saying now is quite contrary to that. The answer is: the past commentary was in the *Tafsīr Nahj al-Balāghah*, in which Sayyid Raḍī has explained the statement of Imam Ali. However, the recent *Tafsīr* is an additional commentary that Sayyid Raḍī did not mention in the first *Tafsīr*. However, the two explanations on

لَوْ كُنْ هَذَا مِنْ وَلَدِ طَائِفَةٍ لَرَبَّحْنَا

and

بِأَبِي أَنْ خَيْرَ الْإِمَاءِ

have been given in two different styles, and there is no contradiction between them.⁴⁷

We have addressed the whole commentary of *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd here, as by this explanation we may more clearly understand historical events. In *Bihār al-Anwār*, Majlisī has mentioned the entire hadith from *Nahj al-Balāghah* of Sharh Ibn Abi Ḥadīd.⁴⁸

ʿAllāmah Mīrzā Ḥabībullah Ḥāshimī Khuṭī, in his *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, says:

All the commentators of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd have taken this part:

لَمْ يَفْرُجِ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ كَفَرِيحَ الْأَدِيمِ بَيْنَ تَوَهُمِهِمْ خَشْفًا وَتَوَهُمِهِمْ عُنْفًا...

The extra part of the sermon has been explained in the hadith of Sulaym Ibn Qays Hilālī and the book of *Ghārāt* of Ibrahim Thaqafī. These items point to the appearance of the government of Imam Mahdī. Therefore, the statement of Imam Ali

يَسُومُهُمْ حَسَفًا

refers to the earth sinking with the army of Sufyānī in the desert as is mentioned in the narrations concerning the event of Returning (*Rajʿat*) in Shiʿism.

Therefore, with regard to the statement of Imam Ali:

فَيَنْدُ ذَلِكَ تَوْدُقُ نَيْشٍ بِالدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا أَوْ يَرَوْنِي مَقَامًا وَاحِدًا أَوْ لَوْ قَدْ جَزِيَ جَزُورٌ لِأَجَلٍ مِنْهُمْ مَا أَطْلَبَ
الْيَوْمَ بَعْضُهُ فَلَا يَعْطُونَنِي.

‘Allāmah Khuṭī, under the title of “completion,” mentions this sermon fully from *al-Bihār al-Anwār* from *Ghārāt* of Ibrahim Ibn Muhammad Thaqafī. *Bihār al-Anwār* also mentions it from the book of Sulaym Ibn Qays Hilālī.⁴⁹

In the aforementioned two hadiths, it is clearly understood that the person who is rising against the oppressors and the Banī Umayyad is the promised, Sayyid al-Fātimī, the son of the maid, not Saffāh, as mentioned in a single hadith.

Further, in the hadith of Ibrāhim Thaqafī and Sulaym, the people of Šiffin were put alongside the people of Nahrawān. He states:

وَلَوْلَا اِنَّكُمْ مَا قُوتِلَ اَصْحَابُ الْجَعَلِ وَلَا اَهْلُ الثَّمَرِ وَانْ

In the annotation, ‘Allāmah Khuṭī says about the meaning of Zāb that it is a river in Mūšil. Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd says:

When Marwān dismounted his horse at Zāb, he chose one thousand of his strong mounted soldiers from among the people of Syria and the people of Jazīrah, and then said:

إِنَّمَا الْمُدَّةُ وَلَا تَنْفَعُ الْمُدَّةُ إِذَا انْقَضَتِ الْمُدَّةُ.

“Indeed these are all the means of victory; however, if the end comes, these will not benefit us.”

On the day of Zāb, as Abdullah Ibn Ali dressed his soldiers in black with black flags in their hands, all mounting camels, and they stood face to face with Marwān and dominated him, Marwān asked a man who was standing by his side: “Who is the army chief?” He answered: “He is Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās Ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Marwān said to that man: “Woe upon you! Is he of the sons of ‘Abbās?” He said: “Yes, he is.” Marwān said:

وَاللَّهِ لَوَدِدْتُ أَنْ عَلِيَّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ مَكَانَهُ فِي هَذَا الصُّفْدِ

“By God, I would like it if Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib were in his place on this day.”

That man said: "You wish Ali were here today, but do you know of his strength and fame, which has spread all over the world?"⁵⁰

Marwān said: "Woe upon you! What you said about Ali's strength is about him and his religion. Religion is something other than governing and kingdom."

Among Ali's unseen knowledge is his prediction about the remaining Khawārij not being killed.

It is narrated in *Nahj al-Balāghah* that when the Khawārij were killed, they said to him:

يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، هَلَكَ الْقَوْمُ بِأَجْمَعِهِمْ. قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: كَلَامُ اللَّهِ وَإِلَهُهُمْ نُكِّلَ فِي أَصْلَابِهِمُ الرِّجَالِ وَ
قَرَاوَاتِ النِّسَاءِ، كُلَّمَا جُمِعَ مِنْهُمْ قَوْمٌ قُطِعَ حَتَّى يَكُونَ آخِرُهُمْ لُصُوصًا سَلَابِينَ وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِيهِمْ:
لَا تَقْتُلُوا الْخَوَارِجَ بَعْدِي، فَلَيْسَ مِنْ كَلْبِ الْحَقِّ فَاعْطَاهُ كَفْرَ كَلْبِ الْبَاطِلِ فَأَذْرَكَهُ (بِقِيَّةِ مُعَاوِيَةَ وَ
أَصْحَابِهِ).⁵¹

"Have all the Khawārij been killed?" Imam Ali said:

Absolutely not. They are not going to be destroyed and will not vanish. By God, they are in the form of seeds in the loins of their fathers and in the wombs of their mothers. When he manifests, a chief or commander among them will be killed until they appear in the form of thieves and start to steal property. [That is, their rise will be so trivial that it will not damage the religion or ruin the government; rather they will only invite people to a certain faith. Their position and dignity will not amount to more than robbery or theft].

Then he added: "After me, do not kill the Khawārij, because one who is the seeker of truth but does not attain it, is not like one who is the seeker of wrong and attains it." Sayyid Raḍi adds: "That is, Mu'āwiyah and his companions."

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has mentioned some of the Khawārij who were born after the demise of Imam Ali who were not on the right path, and tried to create problems, cause corruption in the land, and steal people's belongings. He has also mentioned those Khawārij who were famous, as Imam Ali had already said: "They are in the form of seeds in the loins of their fathers and in the wombs of their mothers." It later became clear that they were Tkrama, the servant of Ibn 'Abbās, and Mālik Ibn Anas Aṣḥabī.⁵²

Concerning the latter, it is narrated that when he mentioned the names of Ali, Othman, and Ṭalḥa, he used to say:

وَاللّٰهُ مَا أَكْتَلُوا إِلَّا عَلَى التَّرِيدِ الْأَغَرِّ.

"By God, they did not fight unless it was simply for a broth made of gazelle's meat."

Abu al-ʿAbbās Muhammad Ibn Yazīd Mubarrad also speaks about the Khawārij in his book *al-Kāmil*, showing a mild inclination towards them.⁵³

As for the explanation of his statement, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd states:

His main intention in this statement was to express that because of some simple doubt, the Khawārij went astray. They were the people who were always after the right; they adhered to the religion and defended their right belief—although they went too far and made some mistakes in their religious belief! Muʿāwiyah, by contrast, was never a seeker of the truth. He was a man devoid of religious belief, and defended his doubtful belief and opinion. He was an aggressive man and used public treasure for his own benefit and to enjoy his life, and whatever he spent of it was for his own personal desires and the strengthening of his sovereignty. This lifestyle proves that he was devoid of mercy and justice, and whatever he did was not right for the nation and the land. Therefore, in light of his horrible behavior, it was not right for the people to support him and fight with the Khawārij who were fighting with him.

The Khawārij used to forbid evil and considered it necessary to rise against tyrannical leaders. It is necessary for our companions to do the same. One should not help a corrupt leader who has the government under his control and attack those who stand against him. Therefore, it is necessary not to help him when the Khawārij rise against him, even if they have gone astray, because they are closer to justice. There is no doubt that there are some concerns about the beliefs of the Khawārij, but there is also no doubt that Muʿāwiyah did not do what the Khawārij did.

Whatever Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has mentioned regarding the Khawārij about corruption may be accepted, but there is some doubt about the truth of their beliefs, particularly with regard to God, Resurrection, and prophethood, as well as the Imamate.

Furthermore, among the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali is the news about Marwān Ibn Ḥakam that he has revealed. It has been recounted in *Nahj al-Balāghah* that when Marwān Ibn Ḥakam was arrested on the day of the Battle of Jamāl, he begged Hasan and Husayn to intercede for him before Imam Ali. These two great young men went to their father and requested that he forgive Marwān. The father

honored his sons' request and let him go.⁵⁴ Then they both said to their father: "Now in this state let him swear allegiance to you, O Master of the Faithful!"

فَلَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَوْ لَمْ يَتَابَعْنِي بَعْدَ ٥٥ كُلِّ عُثْمَانَ؟ لَا حَاجَةَ لِي فِي يَتِيَّتِهِ، إِنَّمَا كَفُّ يَهُودِيَّةٍ لَوْ تَابَعَنِي بِكَفِّهِ لَقَدَّرْتُ بِسُجْدِهِ أَمَّا إِنْ لَمْ أَمْرُهُ كَلْفَمَةِ الْكَلْبِ أَنَفَّهُ وَهُوَ أَبُو الْأَكْبَشِ الْأَنْبَعَةِ، وَسَتَأْتِي الْأُمَّةُ مِنْهُ وَمِنْ وَلَدِ يَوْمِ الْحَمْرِ. ٥٦

Imam Ali said:

What! Has he not sworn allegiance to me after the demise of Othman? I am not in need of his allegiance. Marwān's hand is like a Jewish hand. Even if he swears allegiance to me, he will break his promise in some other way. Be aware, he will govern only as long as a dog licks its nose; [very soon] he will be a chief of no more than four ewes, and very soon the nation will witness his bloodshed as well as that of his children.

Ibn Abi al-Hadid says:

This hadith has been narrated by a few different narrators, and there are some additional explanations of them that the author of *Nahj* has not mentioned. One is the statement about him that:

يَحْمِلُ رَابِعَةً صَلَاحًا بَعْدَ مَا يَتَّيِبُ صَدْعَاهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ أَمْرُهُ...

"He used to carry the banner of perdition on his shoulder until his hair grew gray on both sides of his forehead."

Then he says:

Almost everyone interprets those four ewes that he mentions to be the sons of 'Abd al-Malik, who were Walid, Sulaymān, Yazīd, and Hishām. In the history no other four bothers are reported as rulers from Banī Umayyad or other dynasties, but I assume that they may be his four sons from his other wives, and the they are 'Abd al-Malik, 'Abd al-'Azīz, Bishr, and Muhammad. All of them became chiefs and all were brave. 'Abd al-Malik was a statesman. Bishr became the governor of Iraq. Muhammad was the governor of Jazīrah, and 'Abd al-'Azīz became the governor of Egypt. Each one of them has left behind famous signs. This assumption seems important because it makes it clear that Walid and his brothers were his sons by another wife.

The meaning of "the red day" is a difficult day. It is usually interpreted as a period of famine. The Sanat al-Ḥamrā' (the red year), and

everything about which Imam Ali had informed the nation, as well as this statement:

يَحْمِلُ رَايَةَ ضَلَالَةٍ يَهْدِمُ مَا تَسْبِيحُ صَدَّامٍ

"He used to carry the banner of perdition on his shoulder until his hair grew gray on both sides of his forehead" (and he had taken the government at the age of 65)—all these were as he had predicted."⁵⁷

Majlisi in *Biḥār al-Anwār* has mentioned this sermon in the section on the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali about the sons of 'Abd al-Malik.⁵⁸

Among the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali is a sermon about Mu'āwiyah, his claim to Syria, and his setting out from Syria to Kūfa along with a huge army. This whole story is in *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

الْأَوَّلُ قَبْلَ كُلِّ أَوَّلٍ، وَالْآخِرُ بَعْدَ كُلِّ آخِرٍ، بِأَوَّلِهِ وَجِبَ أَنْ لَا أَوَّلَ لَهُ، وَبِآخِرِيهِ وَجِبَ أَنْ لَا آخِرَ لَهُ وَأَفْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، فَهَذِهِ بَوَائِقُ فِيهَا الشَّرُّ الْإِغْلَانُ وَالْقَلْبُ الْإِنْسَانِ.
أَمَّا النَّاسُ لَا يَجِيرُ بَعْضُكُمْ شِقَاقِي، وَلَا يَنْتَعِزُ بَعْضُكُمْ عِصْيَانِي، وَلَا تَتَرَامُوا بِالْإِهْوَاسِ عِنْدَ مَا تَسْمَعُونَهُ يَقِي. فَوَالَّذِي قَلَقَ الْمَجْدَةَ وَبَرَأَ التَّسَمَةَ، إِنَّ الَّذِي انْبَغَضَ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا كَذَبَ الْمُلُوكُ وَلَا جَوَلُ السَّامِعِ.
وَلَسَكَانِي أَنْظُرَ إِلَى جَلِيلِي تَقَى بِالنَّامِ وَخَسَّ بِرَأْيِي فِي ضَوَائِي كُفُوتَان. فَذَا فَتَرْتُ فَاعْرِضْتُهُ، وَاشْتَدَّتْ فِكْمِيَّتُهُ، وَتَفَلَّتْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَأَنَّهُ، عَشَّتِ الْبَيْتَةُ أَبْنَاءَ مَا بَاتِيهَا، وَمَا جَبَتِ الْحَرْبُ بِأَنْوَاجِهَا، وَتَدَامِنَ الْإِيمَانُ كُلُّوْحَهَا، وَتَدَامِنَ الْبِلَالِي كُلُّوْحَهَا.
فَذَا أُنْبِتَ زَوْعُهُ، وَقَامَ عَلَى بَنِيهِ، وَهَدَرَتْ شَقَاقُهُ، وَتَرَفَّتْ بَوَائِقُهُ، عَقَدَتْ زَاهِلُ الْفَيْتَنِ الشَّجَلَةَ وَأَقْبَلْنَ كَالْبَلِيلِ الْمُطْلِمِ وَالْبَحْرِ الْمُطْلِمِ. هَذَا وَكَرَّ تَحْرِقُ الْكُوفَةِ مِنْ قَاصِبٍ، وَيَزُورُ عَلَيَّاهِ مِنْ عَاصِبٍ. وَ
عَنْ قَلِيلٍ تَلَفَتْ الْقُرُونُ بِالْقُرُونِ، وَتَحْتَضِرُ الْقَائِمُ، وَتُعْظَمُ الْقُصُودُ.⁵⁹

He [God] is the First before every first and the Last after every last. His being the First necessitates that there is no [other] first before Him, and His being the Last necessitates that there is no other last after Him. I witness that there is no god but God, openly as well as secretly, with heart as well as with tongue.

O people, do not commit the crime of opposing me, do not be seduced into disobeying me, and do not wink at each other when you hear me. By God Who germinates the seed and blows the wind, whatever I

convey to you is from the Prophet. Neither did the conveyor [of God's message, i.e. the Prophet] lie, nor did the hearer [Ali] misunderstand.

Well, it is as though I see a misguided man who is shouting in Syria [Sham] and has raised his banners in the outskirts of Kūfa. When his mouth was fully opened, his recalcitrance would become intense and his steps on earth would become heavy [and tyrannical]; then the disorder [so created] would cut the people with its teeth, and war would rage with [all] its waves; days would become severe and nights full of toil. When the crops grow and stand on their stalks, its foam shoots forth and its lightning shines, and the banners of misguided rebellion fire up and shoot forth like darkening night and surging sea. This and how many other storms will rend Kūfa and gales sweep over it, and heads will clash with heads. The crop will be harvested and the harvest will be smashed.

Majlisī says:

It is said that states of being astray refer to Mu'āwīyah; it is also said that the intention here is Sufyānī. Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd says:

The intention here is 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān, because these kinds of attributes are related to him and not to the others. Then he started his own promotion in Syria, which was the sign of the successorship. Then he set up his flags and banners in Kūfa, the first time when he personally went to Iraq and killed Muṣ'ab. The second time he went in disobedience to his commanders to Kūfa, like his brother Bushr Ibn Marwān and some others, until everything fell upon Ḥajjāj, and it was the best stable time for 'Abd al-Malik.

It was at that time that everything changed and became difficult, and one after another, seditions appeared. It was because he disputed with the Khawārij and had a fierce battle with 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Ash'ath. Then, when 'Abd al-Malik's affair came to an end, he died, and after him most of the seditions were settled, such as the battles of his sons with the Banī Mihalab and with Zayd Ibn Ali, and the seditions in Kūfa at the time of Yūsuf Ibn Omar, Khālīd Qasrī, Omar Ibn Hubayrah, and others, and those seditions, oppressions, and aggressions that had arisen in his period.

Some have said, concerning Mu'āwīyah, that Imam Ali has spoken allusively about whatever seditions took place at his time, and those that happened after him at the time of Yazīd and 'Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyād, such as the event of Husayn. However, the first possibility is most likely, because Mu'āwīyah lived at the time of Ali, and it was he who began inviting the people to him from Syria. But the statement of Ali refers to a time later than this event. Do you not consider

what he said about that event where he says: "I see a misguided man who is shouting in Syria (Sham)"⁶⁰

After Majlisī translates this sermon word by word, he says: "Concerning this event, we will explain more news and information from the books of *Fitan* of Bursī and *Mashāriq Anwār al-Yaqīn*."

It has been narrated from Aṣḥabḥ Ibn Nubātah:

Once Imam Ali was sitting in Kūfa and lecturing to some people sitting around him. He said: "Who sees what I see?" They answered: "O you, the Eyes of God, what do you see when looking at us?"

Imam Ali said: "I see a camel carrying a corpse on its back. There is a man walking in front of the camel and another one following him after the camel; they will reach you in three days' time." Three days passed and they witnessed, as the Imam had predicted, two men arrive with a camel carrying a corpse tied on its back. The men saluted him and then those who were present there. After answering their greeting and welcoming them, he asked: "Who are you, from where are you coming, and whose corpse is this on the camel's back? And what have you come here for?"

They said: "We are from Yemen, and this is the corpse of our father. When he was very close to his death, he read his will to us that after giving him the final ritual wash and wrapping him in the shroud and then praying over his corpse, we were to carry his corpse, on his camel, to Iraq and bury it in Kūfa."

The Imam said: "Did you ask him why you should do this?" They answered:

Yes, we did, and he answered and said:

يُدْفَنُ هَذَا رَجُلٌ لَوْ شَفَعَ فِي يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لِأَهْلِ الْمَوْضِعِ لَشَفَعَ.

"One is buried there just because of a man who is going to intercede for the people on the Day of Resurrection; his intercession will be accepted."

Upon hearing what the men said, Imam Ali stood up and said: "He has spoken the truth. By God, I am this man."⁶¹

Among the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali is his knowledge about the Master of Zanj who will lead his army to Basra and kill the people mercilessly there and will ruin their houses. It is of those events that indicate the actions of Atrāk, who massacred the people.

The story of the Master of Zanj (the chief of the Zanzibar) is among the events that took place in Basra. In *Nahj al-Balāghah* he says:

يَا خَنْفَ، كَأَنِّي بِهِ وَقَدْ سَارَ بِالْجَيْشِ الَّذِي لَا يَكُونُ لَهُ غُبَارٌ، وَلَا تُجْبُ، وَلَا تَقْتَعَةُ نُجْمٍ، وَلَا
تَحْتَمَةُ خَيْلٍ، يَمِيزُونَ الْأَرْضَ بِأَقْدَامِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَقْدَامُ النَّمَامِ (نُؤَى بِذَلِكَ إِلَى صَاحِبِ الزَّنْجِ) ثُمَّ قَالَ
عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

وَقُلْ لِيَسْكُنْكُمْ الْمَأْمِرَةُ وَالْدُّورِ الْمُرْعَرِفَةُ أَلَيْسَ لَهَا أُجْحَةٌ كَأُجْحَةِ الشُّسُورِ، وَغَرَاطِيمُ كَغَرَاطِيمِ
الْقَيْلَةِ، مِنْ أَوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَمْتَدُّ قَيْلُهُمْ، وَلَا يُفْتَقَدُ غَايُهُمْ. أَتَاكَبُّ الدُّنْيَا لَوَجْهِهَا، وَقَلْبُهَا
يَقْدَرُهَا، وَتَاظُرُهَا بِعَيْنِهَا.⁶²

“O Ahnaf Ibn Qays! It is as though I see him advancing with an army, which has neither dust nor noise, nor rustling of reins, nor neighing of horses. They are trampling the ground with their feet as if they were the feet of ostriches.”

Sayyid al-Raḍī says:

Imam Ali pointed to the chief of the Negroes (*Ṣāhib Zanj*), and then said: “Woe unto you (the people of Basra) who inhabited streets and decorated houses that possess wings like the wings of vultures and trunks like the trunks of elephants; they are the people from among whom if one is killed, he is not mourned, and if one is lost, he is not searched for. I turn this world over on its face, value it only according to its [moral] value, and look at it with an eye suitable for it.”

Majlisi has stated:

Since the negroes’ marching is in anger and sounds similar to that of horses’ hoofs pounding the ground, Imam Ali said: “They dug the land with their feet.” According to some: “This statement is an allusion to their fierce marching to demonstrate their courage and fierceness against the army opposing them.”

However, what Ali said—“Their steps sound like ostriches walking”—indicates that the negroes’ legs were almost short and their feet flat with loose toes, which are more or less like the claws of ostriches. The sides of their houses that he said are like wide open wings are such because of the rays of light coming through the openings. The wooden houses are roofed with straw mats to prevent the rain from leaking through them. The expression “the trunks of the houses” indicates the drains built below the roofs to drain the water down to the ground; they are rather long, some about two-and-a-half meters, and fixed horizontally

around the roofs. As for what he said: "No one mourns over their corpses," it may be that the Negroes were after fighting and murdering, or they had no families—wives and children—and were bachelors, so they did not care about those who were absent, or it may be that their armies were huge and it was difficult to calculate the number of soldiers.⁶³

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd in *Tārikh Ṣāhib Zanj* has a narration about the chief of the Negroes (*Ṣāhib Zanj*) and how he manifested until he defeated.⁶⁴ He says:

The chief of the Negroes appeared in the Euphrates of Basra in 255 AD, and he introduced himself to the people as: "I am Ali Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn 'Isā Ibn Zayd Ibn Ali Ibn al-Husayn Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib." It was then that the Negroes, who were mostly out of work and working as the rubbish-collectors on the roads and doing trivial jobs, gathered around him. However, most of the people, especially the offspring of Abu Ṭālib, the Fāṭimis and 'Alawies, and even the others, did not take him seriously and found errors in his origin and his way of acting. They took him to be a liar. Now, all the scholars unanimously believed that he was from the tribe of 'Abd al-Qays; that is, he was Ali Ibn Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥīm, and his mother was from the tribe of Banī Asad, from Asad Ibn Khuzā'a, and his grandfather was Muḥammad Ibn Ḥakīm Asadī, from Kūfa. He was one of the men who was alongside Zayd Ibn Ali Ibn al-Husayn and stood against Hishām Ibn 'Abd al-Malik. And when Zayd was martyred, he fled and went to Ray and settled in a village called Varzanīn. He stayed there for some period of time; and the chief of the Negroes (*Ṣāhib al-Zanj*), Ali Ibn Muḥammad, was born there. His grandfather, 'Abd al-Raḥīm, was a man from the tribe of 'Abd Qays. He was born in Ṭāliqān, then he went to Iraq and purchased a slave-girl from Sind and she gave a birth to Muḥammad (*Ṣāhib Zanj*).

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd continues:

Mas'ūdī, in his book *Murūj al-Dhihab*, has stated:

Different things that Muḥammad (*Ṣāhib Zanj*) has done prove that he could not belong to the Ṭālibiyyīn. Moreover, his attitudes and bad behaviors show his background, because his actions indicate that he was of the Azāriqah (a tribe from the Khawārij) and had the intention of killing children, women, elderly men, and weak people. It has been narrated that once he made a speech and he indicated that "there is no god but God, God is great, God is Lofty, and the command is in His hand," but he did quite opposite [of his declaration], because he considered all sins to be associating partners with God. Some people criticized him about his religious belief, and have

compared them to heresy (*zandaqih*), and said he was far from the truth! It appears that in the beginning he was involved in astrology and witchcraft and the use of astrolabe.⁶⁵

Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī has said that Ali Ibn Muhammad went to Sāmarrā and became a teacher. He used to praise the writers and ask people for help and donations. He went to Bahrain in 249 AH and introduced himself as Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn al-Faḍl Ibn al-Hasan Ibn Abdullah Ibn al-ʿAbbās Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, and in this way, he made the people there order obedience to him.⁶⁶

Ṭabarī continues: "When on his way, Muhammad (*Ṣāhib Zanj*), reached the territory of a tribe, he introduced himself as Yahyā Ibn Omar Ibn al-Hasan Ibn Zayd Ibn Ali Ibn al-Husayn Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib."⁶⁷ Then he states: Next he went to Baghdad and stayed there for a whole year. While there, he introduced himself as Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn ʿIsā Ibn Zayd."⁶⁸ Then he adds,

During that time, *Ṣāhib Zanj* related himself to Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Zayd Ibn Ali Ibn al-Husayn. That was after he had introduced himself as Ahmad Ibn ʿIsā Ibn Zayd. It was because when he was being sacked in Basra, a group of the people of Basra went to him, and some children of Ahmad Ibn ʿIsā Ibn Zayd were among them. He was frightened and called himself Muhammad Ibn Zayd.⁶⁹ After that he chose for himself the title of the son of Yahyā Ibn Zayd, which was totally a lie, because almost everyone knew that when Yahyā Ibn Zayd died, he had no sons. He had only one daughter, and she had died many years back when she was still a baby.

Further, Ibn Abi-Ḥadīd says:

Ali Ibn Husayn Masʿūdī in *Murūj al-Dhihab* says:

This event occurred in Basra, and on account of it, three hundred people of Basra died. Ali Ibn Abān Muhallabī, after freeing himself from the event, set up a pulpit in the district of Banī Yashkūr, and on Friday led the Friday prayers and made a speech concerning the death of *Ṣāhib Zanj*. After his sermon, he sent his praise and blessing upon Abu Bakr and Omar, but he did not mention Ali and Othman in his speech. Then he cursed some people, such as Abu Mūsā al-Ashʿarī, ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ, and Muʿāwiyah Ibn Abi Sufyān.

Masʿūdī says: "This event confirms what we have mentioned about his religion, that it was Azāriqah."⁷⁰ However, concerning the

armies of Atrāk, that is, the army of Genghis Khān Tātār, he mentions in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, following the above statement, that:

كَأَنِّي أَرَاهُمْ قَوْمًا كَانُوا جُوهَهُمُ الْتِجَانُ الْمَكْرُوفَةُ، يَلْبَسُونَ الشَّرَقَّ وَالذِّيَابَجَ، وَيَعْتَمِدُونَ الْحِجْلَ الْيَتَاقَ وَيَكُونُ هُنَاكَ اسْتِقْرَازُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ يَتَمَيَّزُ أَنْجَرُوحٌ عَلَى الْمُتَوَلِّ، وَكَفُونُ الْمُفْلِكِ أَقْلٌ مِنَ الْمُسَوِّدِ. هَلَّا لَمْ يَتَضَعْ أَحْسَانِيهِ: قَدْ اغْطَيْتُ بِمَا أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عِلْمَ الْغَيْبِ، فَصَحِّحْتُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَ وَكُلَّ لِلزَّجَلِ وَكُنْ كُلِّيًّا: يَا أَخَا كُلِّ نَيْسٍ مَنْ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبٌ وَأَمَّا هُوَ فَتَكَلَّمُ مِنْ ذِي عِلْمٍ وَأَمَّا عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ بِفَرْزِهِ: «إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ، الْآيَةُ (34: لقمان). فَيُعْظَمُ مِنْخَلَّةُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مِنْ نَهْرٍ لَوْ أَتَى، وَقَمِيعٍ أَوْ يَجِيلٍ، وَسَحْنٍ أَوْ يَجِيلٍ، وَغَنٍّ أَوْ سَيِّدٍ وَتَمَنُّ يَكُونُ فِي الثَّارِ حَكْمًا أَوْ فِي الْخِطَابِ لِلثَّيِّينِ مَرَامًا. هَذَا عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ الَّذِي لَا يَلْمُزُهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَسُوءُ ذَلِكَ فَعِلْمُ عَلَمَةِ اللَّهِ نَبِيَّهُ فَصَلَّيْهِ وَدَعَا لِي بِأَيْمِيهِ صَدْرِي وَتَعْظَمُ عَلَيْهِ جَوَانِحِي.»⁷¹

"I can see the people whose faces are like shields covered with rough-scraped skins. They dress themselves in silken and woolen clothes and have chosen expensive, excellent horses. Their killing and bloodshed shall take place freely until the wounded will walk over the dead and the number of run-aways will be less than those taken prisoner."

One of his companions said to him: "O the Master of the Faithful, you have been given the knowledge of unseen things"; whereupon Imam Ali laughed and said to the man who belonged to the tribe of Banū Kalb:

O brother of Kalb! This is not knowledge of hidden things ('*ilm al-ghayb*); these matters I have heard from him [i.e. the Prophet] who knew them. With regard to the knowledge of hidden things, that means knowledge of the Day of Judgment, and the things concealed by God in the verse *Verily, the knowledge of the Hour is with God...* (31:34). Therefore, the Almighty God knows how an embryo in the womb of a certain mother is, whether it is a male or female, or beautiful or ugly, or whether it is going to be a generous or a mean person, victorious or wretched. He knows who is going to be in the Fire, and who is going to be the companion of the prophets in Paradise. This is the meaning of the unseen knowledge, and no one knows it except the Almighty God. However, apart from this knowledge is the knowledge that God has trained His Prophet with. The Prophet has prayed for me to receive such knowledge, and to remember it forever. Due to his prayer in my case, my heart has become a secure place and source to protect it.

Majlisī, after this statement of the Imam about the miracle of the unseen knowledge, states: "The reason for his smile might be because of the knowledge that God had bestowed upon him, or about the question that the man had asked him." Then Majlisī states: "It is not necessary to assert that this prediction of Imam Ali might be about Genghis Khān and his children's invasion."⁷²

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has given enough explanation about this sermon concerning the seditions of the Tātārs and Genghis Khān.⁷³ About the selection of these five different kinds of knowledge that are given in the blessed verse, he states:

A man went to Mūsā Ibn Ja'far and said: "Last night, I dreamed in my sleep that I was questioning you about how much longer I was going to live. Then you raised your right hand in front of my face while keeping two of your fingers separated in a 'v' form, but I did not know what you meant by that. I did not understand whether it meant five years or five months!" To his question, the Imam answered:

Neither; it is for those five kinds knowledge that are specific to God only, for He says: "Indeed the knowledge of time is with God." If you ask why the Master of the Faithful smiled when that man said to him that he was given the unseen knowledge, and whether it was not a sign of overconfidence in His Excellency's case, I say: the Prophet had also encountered similar cases. Such kinds of smiling are mentioned in the hadiths. For example when the Prophet asked God for rain, it immediately rained, but it rained beyond the need of the community. So all the people stood up and asked the Prophet to pray to God to stop the raining. So the Prophet prayed, the whole time he was on the pulpit, with his finger pointing to the clouds. All of a sudden the clouds separated and made a wide circle above in the sky of Medina. All this happened while the Prophet was praying. Then he burst into laughter. He laughed so much that the audience saw his teeth. Then he said: "I bear witness that I am the Prophet of God."

The secret of this laughing and calling himself the Prophet of God in front of the others is that when a saint becomes the beloved of God, he must reveal his happiness. Laughter comes from cheerfulness, and if it is not because of one's self-esteem, it is not blameworthy. On the other hand, it is a sign of gratitude for God's blessing. Concerning the attributes of the saints, the Qur'an says:

فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

"They rejoice in what blessing and bounty has been given by Allah (3:170)." You may consider this verse:

وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا

"No one knows what he is going to do the next day," to be among the five kinds of unseen knowledge. However, we know that God, the Sublime, would inform His Prophet about whatever was going to happen the next day, as He did about the victory of Mecca. The Prophet did the same for his successor—he would let him know what was going to happen in the near or distant future, as when he informed him: "After me, you are going to fight those who violate the treaty."

To remove your doubt, I would like to say with reference to the foregoing verse, that "No one knows what is going to happen in the future except the one who is permitted by Him to know."⁷⁴

Among the statements of Imam Ali is sermon one hundred, which refers to the Day of Resurrection:

وَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ لِنَقَاشِ الْحِسَابِ وَجَزَاءِ الْأَعْمَالِ، خُضُوعًا قِيَامًا، قَدْ أَتَجَمَعَهُمُ
الْعَرْقُ، وَرَجَفَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ. فَأَخَسَتْهُمْ حَالًا تَمَنَّى وَجَدَ لِقَدَّتِيهِ تَوْضِيعًا وَلِنَفْسِهِ مَسَاسًا...

And that day will be such that God will gather on it those gone before and those who came after in order to take an accurate account of their deeds to reward or punish them. Sweat [because of distress] will flow to their necks while the earth will be trembling under their feet. The best situation among them will be of the one who finds a resting place for his feet and an open place for his breath...

Majlisi maintains that after the aforementioned sermon, the statement of Imam continues about the seditions in the Last Days, or the sedition of *Ṣāhib Zanj*, when he says:⁷⁵

فَتَنْ كَهْطِ اللَّيْلِ الطُّلَمِ، لَا تَعْلَمُ مَا قَانِيَتُهُ، وَلَا تُرْذِلُهَا رَابِيَةً، تَأْتِيكُمْ مَزْمُومَةٌ مَزْمُولَةٌ، يَحْمِلُهَا
قَانِدُهَا، وَيُجَاهِدُهَا رَاكِبُهَا. أَهْلُهَا قَوْمٌ شَدِيدٌ كَلِمَتُهُمْ
قَلِيلٌ سَلَامَتُهُمْ. يُجَاهِدُهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَوْمٌ أَذَلَّةٌ عِنْدَ الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ، فِي الْأَرْضِ مَجْهُولُونَ، وَفِي السَّمَاءِ
مَعْرُوفُونَ.

قَوْلُكَ لَكَ يَا هَاضِمَةُ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ جَيْشٍ مِنْ نَعَمِ اللَّهِ لَا رَيْحَ لَكَ وَلَا حِسَّ، وَسَيَبْقَى أَهْلُكَ بِالْمَوْتِ
الْأَمْتَرِ وَالْجُوعِ الْأَثْمَرِ.⁷⁶

Seditions and troubles come together like a dark night. No power could stand to face them, nor would any war banners turn them away from them.

These seditions will approach you at full speed and will be ready to attack you upon your camel saddles. Their leader will be driving them, and the rider will be urging [them] on. The trouble-mongers will be the people whose attacks will be severe.

Those who fight them for the sake of God will be a people who will be low in pride, unknown on the earth but well known in the sky [to God].

Woe to you, O Basra, when an army of God with infliction faces you without ~~cries~~ or [raising] the dust. Your inhabitants will then face bloody death and dire hunger.

Ibn Abi al-Hadid says:

It means when an army raises no dust or makes any noise, it is not an army of mounted camels, but rather of famine, drought, and plague that will befall them one after the other. The meaning of the red death is hunger and cholera; the bloody death refers to hunger and lack of food. The death caused by famine is said to be the red death, because of its severity. Concerning this issue, there is another statement:

كُنَّا إِذَا حَمَرَ الْهَامُ اتَّقَيْنَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

"We were in such a state that when the battle was too fierce, we took refuge with the Prophet of God."

He has described the hunger as gray hunger, because when a hungry man looks at the horizon, he sees it as dusty and hazy.

Some people have interpreted this part of Imam Ali's words as the event of *Ṣāliḥ Zanj*, but that is unlikely because his army made great noise. On the other hand, he warns the people of Basra against these probable seditions. Do you not notice when he says:

قَوْلُكَ يَا بَصْرَةَ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ

"So woe on you, people of Basra, when it happens!" Now before the rising of *Ṣāliḥ Zanj*, there was no such sedition in Basra like the one he has mentioned.⁷⁷

Among the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali is a sermon in which he complains of the Banī Umayyad. He predicts their destruction. This sermon is in *Nahj al-Balāghah*. After mentioning the Prophetic

mission of the Messenger God and giving good news and warning the people, he says:

فَلَا رِشْلَ لَكُمْ فَاغِيرَةً، وَأَيْدِيكُمْ جَمَاعَةً مَسْخُورَةً، وَأَيْدِي الْقَادَةِ عَنْكُمْ مَكْفُوفَةٌ، وَسُيُوفُكُمْ
عَلَيْهِمْ مُسَلَّطَةٌ، وَسُيُوفُهُمْ عَنْكُمْ مَقْبُوحَةٌ إِلَّا وَإِنْ لِكُلِّ دَمٍ كَثِيرًا، وَلِكُلِّ حَقٍّ طَالِبًا، وَإِنْ
الْغَيْرُ فِي دِمَائِكُمْ لَكُمْ فِي حَقِّ نَفْسِهِ وَهُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا يُخْزِي مَنْ كَلَّبَ، وَلَا يَقُولُهُ مَنْ هَرَبَ.
فَقَسِمُ بِاللَّهِ إِنِّي أَرَى عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَتَتَرَنَّ مَا فِي أَيْدِي غَيْرِكُمْ وَفِي تَارِعَتِكُمْ.⁷⁸

The land will be open to plunder without hindrance or defender. Your hands with power will be extended, while the hands of the true leaders from the Household of the Prophet will be closed. Your swords will be against them and their swords against you. Beware! For every {man's} blood [that is shed] there is an avenger, and for every right there is a claimant. The avenger for our blood is like the judge for his own claim, and it is God Who is such that if one seeks Him, then He does not disappoint him, and one who runs away from Him cannot escape Him. I swear by God, O Banī Umayyad, soon you will see it [i.e. your possession] in the hands of others and in the house of your enemy.

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd in his *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, says:

It is as if by means of this statement:

سُيُوفُكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ مُسَلَّطَةٌ، وَسُيُوفُهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ مَقْبُوحَةٌ

"Your swords will be against them and their swords against you," Imam Ali hinted at the event of the martyrdom of Husayn and his family—as if he witnessed the event of Ṭaff, and then gave his sermon according to what was clear to him, and he predicted it. He then swore, and in his swearing he specified that the Banī Umayyad would take authority for themselves. It happened in the same way as he predicted. The government was at the disposal of the Banī Umayyad for nearly 90 years, and then the Banī ʿAbbās, who were the grave enemy of the Banī Umayyad, took it away.⁷⁹

Among the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali is his knowledge about the appearance and revenge of Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf Thaqaḥī. In a sermon, in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, he states:

وَلَوْ دُرِّدْتُ أَنْ اللَّهَ فَرَّقَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَالْحَقَّ بَيْنَهُمَا حَقٌّ بِي مِنْكُمْ. قَوْمُ اللَّهِ مَيَّامِينَ الرَّأْيِ،
مَرَاجِيعُ الْحِلْمِ، مَقَاوِيلُ الْحَقِّ، مَتَابِرُكَ اللَّيْنِ، مَضَوَّافُ دُمَا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ، وَأَوْجَعُوا عَلَى الْحُجَّةِ،
فَطَفَرُوا بِالْمَقْبِيِّ الدَّائِمَةِ وَالْكَرَامَةِ الْبَارِدَةِ
أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَيَسْلُكُنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غُلَامٌ نَقِيفٌ، الدَّهَالُ الْمِثَالُ، يَأْكُلُ خَضِرَتَكُمْ، وَيَذِيبُ
تَحْمَسَكُمْ. لَهُ أَبَا وَدَّعَةً⁸⁰

My yearning is that God may cause separation between me and you, and connect me with those who have a better right to be with me than you have. By God, they are the people of blissful ideas, of enduring wisdom and truthful speech. They keep aloof from revolt. They plod onward on the path [of God] and move on the straight path. Consequently, they achieve the everlasting life to come and honorable ease.

Beware! by God, a tall lad of swinging gait from Banī Thaḳīf will be placed over you. He will eat away your vegetation and melt your fat. So, O Aba Wadhaha², is that all?

Following this sermon, Sayyid Raḍī says: "The meaning of the word of *wadhaha²* is *khafansā*, that is, a black beetle with long legs that moves very slowly; it collects dirt and unclean things from the surface of the ground. By mentioning this example, the Imam means Ḥajjāj.

Sayyid Raḍī has mentioned something different about the meanings of the word *khafansā²*. One of them is that once Ḥajjāj saw a creature in the shape of a *wadhaha²* moving on his prayer-mat. He brushed it aside but it returned. Again he brushed it farther away and it returned. For the third time he forced it behind, but it bit his hand. Because of this very bite, his hand swelled, and before long he died of an unknown disease. It is said that God sent Ḥajjāj to death in the worst way possible, as he did with Namrūd Ibn Kanʿān. He assigned a gnat to kill him!

There is another hadith relating to this insect. Whenever Ḥajjāj saw a *khafansā²* moving near him, he commanded his servants to brush it away, and he said: "This is a dirty creature; it is like the dirt of Satan!" He compared it with dung.

Once Ḥajjāj noticed some *khafansā²*s had come together. He said: "It is very strange if one says God has created them!" Then someone told him: "So who has created them?" He answered: "They are created by Satan. God's position is beyond creating such dirty creatures!"

So Imam Ali knew well that Ḥajjāj was contaminated with dirt, that is, he had committed great crimes and sins, and this was noticeable by everyone at first sight, so he called him the dung of animals—he gave him nickname Wadhāḥa'. So this name could either be due to Ḥajjāj's abjectness, or an attribute of his physical appearance and the devilish acts he used to commit.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

Ali told the people of Basra:

إِنْ كُنْتُ قَدْ آذَيْتُكُمْ الْإِمَامَةَ وَنَحَضْتُ لَكُمْ بِالنِّيبِ، وَأَهْمُسُونِي فَكُذِّبُونِي فَسَلَّمَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْكُمْ فَقِي تَقْيِيدَ كُلِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: رَجُلٌ لَا يَدْعُ لِلَّهِ حُرْمَةً إِلَّا اتَّهَمَهَا. بَنِي الْحِجَابِ.⁸¹

"Now that I have given to you your trust, and pointed out your faults admonishingly, you are accusing me and rejecting me! Therefore, the Almighty God will make an astute young man dominate you. He is a man who does not care to disgrace the others."

Here, Ibn Shahr Āshūb says the Imam meant Ḥajjāj.

Majlisī, from *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* [Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd edition], has narrated this hadith through Othman Ibn Sa'īd, Yahyā, and A'ash, saying that Ismā'īl Ibn Rajā narrated that when Imam Ali was giving a sermon and was talking about Malāḥim, A'ashā Bāhila, who was a young man, stood up, saying to the Imam: "O your Excellency! How your statements resemble superstitions!" Ali told him:

إِنْ كُنْتُ إِجْمَاعِيًّا فَلَكَ يَا غُلَامُ قَرَمَاكَ اللَّهُ بِغُلَامٍ تَقْيِيدَ ثُمَّ سَكَتَ

"If you are proved dishonest in what you say, then God will make you dominated by a shrewd young man, and you will be as a slave to him." Then he kept quiet!

Another man stood up, asking: "O Master of the Faithful, who is that young man?" He answered:

غُلَامٌ يَمْلِكُ بِلَدَكُمْ هَذِهِ، لَا يَتْرُكُ لِلَّهِ حُرْمَةً إِلَّا اتَّهَمَهَا، يَنْزِرُ بِعُنُقِ هَذَا السَّلَامِ بِسَيْفِهِ

"He is a young man who is going to govern this town of yours. He will not have any respect for God, and he will violate your honor; he will behead this young man with a sword!"

They asked him how long he was going to govern them. Ali answered: "At most, twenty years." They asked him whether he would be murdered or die a natural death. Imam Ali answered that he would die with a severe pain in his stomach; the excessive pain would form a hole in his stomach!

Ismā'īl Ibn Rajā says:

By God, I saw with these two eyes of mine that they took A'ashā Bāhila, who was arrested along with the other captives from the army of Muhammad Ibn Ash'ath, to Hājāj. After reproaching him, Hājāj punished him and asked him to read the poem that he had composed encouraging 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Muhammad Ash'ath to battle. After hearing the elegy, he beheaded him in the same session.⁸²

Imam Husayn, after his famous sermon on the Day of 'Āshurā, has mentioned the so-called slave Thaqafi and then cursed him by saying:

اللَّهُمَّ احْبِسْ عَنْهُمْ قَطْرَ السَّمَاءِ، وَابْعَثْ عَلَيْهِمْ بَيْنَ كَيْفَى يُوسُفَ، وَسَلِّطْ عَلَيْهِمْ غُلَامَ تَقِيْفٍ قَيْسُومَهُمْ
كَلَامُ مَصْبُورَةٍ، فَهُمْ كَذُوبًا وَغَدُلُوتًا، وَأَنْتَ رَبُّنَا، عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنْبَتَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ.⁸³

"O Creator! Discontinue sending rain from the sky for this community, and assign for them hunger and famine similar to that of the time of Yūsuf, and appoint that young Thaqafi to let them drink the poison out of the bowl. It is because they reject us and have humiliated us. You are our Creator and we take refuge in You. We are returning to You, and all returns are unto You!"

Hājāj Ibn Yūsuf was made the governor of Kūfa by 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwān, and he killed as many as he could from the community—he killed the good with the evil ones. The people who were killed during his twenty-year-old government exceeded one hundred twenty thousand. On the day he died, there were fifty thousand male prisoners and the thirty thousand female.⁸⁴

Among Imam Ali's unseen knowledge is the following, which both Ibn Shahr Āshūb and Majlisī have narrated as follows:

Once, at the time of Othman's ruling, Hudhayfah Ibn Yamān told Imam Ali:

By God, until last night I had not understood what you meant by that incident, and I did not know the interpretation of it. Then, I remembered that in Harrah [a kilometer and a half from Medina], when I had fallen asleep during the day, you told me: "O Hudhayfah, how would you feel if you saw [ʿAtīq, Omar, and Othman] oppressing another one [Ali]?" You told me this while the Prophet was still alive and he was among us. At that time I did not understand what you were saying, until last night when I saw ʿAtīq (Abu Bakr) and Omar take the lead."

Imam Ali said: "O Ḥudhayfah, apart from those three, I forgot to mention 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Awf. It was he who hurt me at the session of consultation and appointed the caliphate for Othman."

In another hadith, it has been narrated that Imam Ali said to Ḥudhayfah:

وَسَيُضَمُّ إِلَيْهِمْ عَمْرُو بْنُ الْعَاصِ مَعَ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ أَكْلَةَ الْأَكْبَادِ فَهَؤُلَاءِ الْفُتُونُ الْجَمْعَةُ عَلَى ظُلْمِي.⁸⁵

"And before long, two others, 'Amr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ and Muʿāwīyah the son of Hind, the liver-eater, will join them, so they will be five and will cooperate against me."

I had already seen in *Qiṣaṣ al-ʿUlamā* by Tunkābunī, which was narrated by the late Hājj Mirzā Mahmūd Nizām al-ʿUlamā Tabrizī, the hadith below with similar content:

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْفُتُونِ فَالْمَا عَلِمْتَ الْفُتُونِ الْوَاحِدِ.

"May God curse those whose initials were A, A, and O, who hurt the lonely A!"

The late Nizām al-ʿUlamā was with the other shaykhs in Tabriz who conducted a session of inquisition to question Sayyid Muhammad Ali Bāb, the chief of the community of Bābīyyah. Among the questions they asked him was the foregoing question, but Sayyid Bāb was not able to answer it.⁸⁶

I did not know its meaning either until years later when I referred to *al-Manāqib* and found out how easy the answer to it was. The reason that the late Nizām al-ʿUlamā asked such a question of the Sayyid was that Sayyid claimed to be the gate of all knowledge. That is why everyone believed that he had the entirety of knowledge, so he chose this question, and Bāb did not know its answer; so it became clear to the people that he was a liar.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from 'Abd al-Razzāq, and 'Abd al-Razzāq from his father, from Minā, and Minā has also quoted 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn 'Awf's servant as saying:

Ali heard a loud uproar from the soldiers in his army. He asked what the uproar was about, and he was informed that Muʿāwīyah had been killed. The Imam said:

كَلَّا وَرَبِّ الْكَفَّةِ، لَا يُقْتَلُ حَتَّى يَجْمَعَ عَلَيْهِ الْأَمَّةُ

"It is not so, by God, the Owner of the Ka'ba; he has not been killed. He will not die until the whole community attacks him."

His soldiers asked him: "O Master of the Faithful, so why are we fighting against him?" The Imam answered:

أَلَيْسَ الْمُنْذَرُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ⁸⁷

"I am fighting against him just to fulfil my duty as proof and the pact between me and God."

Further, Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from Naḍr Ibn Shamīl, from ʿAwf, from Marwān Aṣfar, saying that:

When Ali was in Kūfa, a man came from Syria bringing the news of Muʿāwīyah's death. They took him to Ali. The Imam asked him: "Were you there as a witness to his corpse?" The man answered: "Yes, I bore witness, and above all, I myself took part in throwing soil on his corpse in the grave." Imam Ali said: "This man is a liar!"

The men asked: "O Master of the Faithful, how do you know that he is a liar?" The Imam answered: "Muʿāwīyah will not die until he commits indecent acts in his government." They asked: "Then why are you fighting against him?" The Imam answered: "Just to do my duty and issue an ultimatum."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has also narrated from Rāqib Isfahani in *Muḥāḍirāt* that Imam Ali said:

لَا يَمُوتُ ابْنُ هِنْدٍ يَلْقَى الصَّلِيبَ فِي عُنُقِهِ

"The son of Hind [i.e. Muʿāwīyah] will not die until he wears a cross around his neck!" Aḥnaf Ibn Qays, Aṭham Kūfī, Abu Ḥayyān Tawḥīdī, Abu Thallāj, and some others have narrated this and added that it happened in the same way as Ali had predicted.⁸⁸

Again, Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from Ishāq Ibn Ḥassān, with his chains from Aṣbagh Nubātah:

Imam Ali commanded us to leave Kūfa for Madāʿin. We set out on the same Sunday. Right in the middle of the road, ʿAmr Ibn Ḥārith, Ashʿath Ibn Qays, and Jarir Ibn Abdullah Bajalī, along with five others, separated from us, and went toward Hirāt, called Khawmaq⁸⁹ and Sudayr.⁹⁰ Before leaving us, they said: "We will join Ali on Friday. We will come to you before the Friday congregational prayer in order to join Ali for the prayer."

When those eight were sitting for lunch in the desert, they noticed that a crocodile was creeping past them, so they caught it. ʿAmr Ibn Ḥārith took its paw, opened it, and mockingly told his friends: "Now come on, pay allegiance to this crocodile; this is your Master of the Faithful." They

too paid allegiance to it, and then freed the animal and soon left Madā'in, while saying to one another: "Ali Ibn Abi Tālib thinks he knows unseen events! There, we ignored his being the caliph and paid allegiance to a crocodile!"

They set out until they reached Madā'in on Friday and immediately entered the mosque. Right then Imam Ali was on the pulpit and giving a sermon, and he said:

The Prophet of God has unveiled many secrets to me, each one a long hadith with an open door, and each door opens to a thousand other doors! God, the Almighty, has stated in His Book:

يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنثَىٰ بِمَا صَمَرَ

The Day when We shall call forth all men along with whoever has led them (17:71).

I swear by God that on the Day of Resurrection, eight among these people will be introduced with their leader, who is a crocodile. If I want to, I can give their names.

Hearing what the Imam said, they were frightened and shivered in fright. 'Amr Ibn Hārith was trembling like the leaves of a date palm.⁹¹

It has been narrated as a hadith from Hasan Ibn Ali that Ash'ath Ibn Qays Kindī had built a small minaret on his house, and whenever he heard the call to prayer from the mosque, he too would climb the minaret and shout:

يَا زَيْلُكَ كَاذِبٌ سَايِرٌ

"O man, you are really a charming liar!" My father used to call him a rolling pin of fire! And in another hadith he was called the flames of the fire.

When Ali was asked about this name given to him, he said: "When Ash'ath dies, there will descend fire from the sky that will burn him to ashes, and then they will bury his charcoal-black corpse."

When his death approached, those close to him witnessed that a neck-like fire was coming down from the sky. As he was screaming with fright, the fire engulfed him and burnt him into charcoal.⁹²

Abu al-Jawāyiz Kaṭīb has narrated quoting Ali Ibn Othman, quoting Muzaffar Ibn Hasan Wāsiṭī Sallāl from Hasan Ibn Dhikrūdān:

Once , in my hometown, I visited Ali in my dream. Soon after that, I went to Medina to meet him. In his presence, I embraced Islam and he renamed me Hasan. Since then, I have heard many hadiths from him, and I was with him in all battles and wherever he was. One day I asked him: "O Master of the Faithful, please pray for me."

Imam Ali said: "O Fārsī (from Persia), you are going to have a long life, and you will be taken to a town that was built by a man of Banī ‘Abbās, which is going to be called Baghdad . However, before reaching that town you will die in a town called Madā’in." Years later, he was dead in Madā’in in the same way as the Imam had predicted.⁹³

Mas‘adah Ibn Yasa‘ has narrated from Imam Ṣādiq saying that when Imam Ali was passing by the land of Baghdad, he asked: "What is this land called?" They said that it was Baghdad. The Imam said: "Yes, there will be built a town in this territory with such-and-such a description."

Some have said: "Once the Imam's whip (*sawṭ*) fell from his hand, and right then His Excellency asked his companions what the name of the land was. They informed him that it was Baghdad. The Imam told them that there would be built a mosque there that would be called the Mosque of Sawṭ (Whip)!⁹⁴

It is written in *Tārīkh Baghdad* that Mufīd Abu Bakr Jurjānī said:

Abu al-Dunyā, who was born at the time of Abu Bakr's caliphate says:

My father and I went to visit Ali, and when we came close to Kūfa, we were very thirsty. I told my father to sit there and let me go around that desert in order to find some water to drink and wash. He permitted me and I started looking around to see if there was water anywhere. After searching for a few minutes, I reached a place between two mountains and noticed a spring of running water. I drank some water and quenched my thirst and then performed ablution. Then I went to my father and told him: "Come, stand up and let's go to the well I have found. God has favored us by sending us pure water in this desert." We set out for the spring, but we could not find it! My father was excessively thirsty, shivering from weakness, and he could not carry on without water, and died in the desert!

I went to Imam Ali, and there I saw that they had mounted him on his mule and were ready to set out for Ṣiffīn. I got closer to him. The Imam turned to me and asked me about my condition and I explained to him everything about my affairs. He said: "The water in that spring is strange, and whoever drinks of that water lives a long

life. I give you the glad tidings that you are going to live long." Then the Imam called me Mu'ammār (one who has long life), and this man was known as 'Ashajj, and people called him by this nickname.

Khaṭīb says: "I entered Baghdad in the year 300 AH and there were some shaykhs and great men. They asked the biography of this man from the people of Baghdad and they said: 'He is a man among us who is known as the long-living man.' Later on, I came to know that he died in 327 AH. Shaykh Ṭūsī in his *Amālī* has written about the date of his death in a similar way."⁹⁵

According to a hadith from A'mash, Ibn Shahr Āshūb has said that a man in Hamedan has narrated:

We were in the presence of Imam Ali in Ṣiffin. All of a sudden, the army of Sham attacked the main part of Ali's army. Mālik Ibn Ashtar cried out to us to retreat. Imam Ali said: "O Abu Muslim, capture them," i.e. capture the soldiers of Sham. Ali gave the same command three times.

Ashtar asked: "O Master of the Faithful, Abu Muslim is not with that army." The Imam replied: "I do not mean Abu Muslim Khulānī. I mean a man who will rise at the End of the Time (*Ākhir al-Zamān*) from the east. And God will ruin the people of Sham by his hand and will put the sovereignty of Banī Umayyad at his disposal."⁹⁶

It is clear that the Imam's statement referred to Abu Muslim Khorasani, who rose up from Khorasan to protect the Household of the Prophet, and finally ruined the kingdom of Banī Umayyad.

There is a hadith in *Kharāyij wa Jarāyih* from Ibn Mas'ūd in which he states:

I was sitting with Imam Ali in the Mosque of the Prophet when suddenly a man cried out: "Who is there to guide me to a person to teach me some knowledge?"

I told him:

O man, have you heard the statement of the Prophet of God saying:

أَكْأَمَدِيَّةُ الْعِلْمِ وَعَلَى بَابِهَا.

"I am the City of Knowledge and Ali is its gate?"

He said: "Yes, I have heard." I told him: "Then where are you going? This man is Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib!" The man turned his face to Ali and

politely sat before him. The Imam asked him where he was from. He answered that he was from Isfahan. The Imam told him to write:

أَمَلَى عَلِيٌّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ: أَنَّ أَهْلَ إِسْفَهَانَ لَا يَمْكُونُ فِيهِمْ خَمْسٌ عِصَالٍ: الْكِبَالَةُ وَالْجَمَاعَةُ وَ
الْإِمَانَةُ وَالْعَمِيرَةُ وَخُجَّاءُ أَهْلِ الْيَمِينِ

"Ali Ibn Abi Tālib dictated it and I wrote it down that the people of Isfahan are lacking in five attributes: generosity, bravery, honesty, zeal, and compassion."

The man said: "O Master of the Faithful, say something more to me."

Imam Ali told him in the dialect of Isfahani: "It is enough for you today!"

After recounting this hadith, Majlisī says:

Right from the beginning until the Safavid period, the people of Isfahan were the severest enemies of the Household. But endless praises to God that now they are the most affectionate and pious people; now, the people of Isfahan are the most obedient in fulfilling the commands of the Household, and they are seeking to gain knowledge, and are among the most expectant for their Absent Imam. Now, because of the Safavids' instruction, there can hardly be found any irreligious people. Because of the Safavids' blissful ruling, their other four attributes have also disappeared. May God favor us and all those people to witness the appearance of the existing progeny of Muhammad and help him, and under his close attention to be martyred, and may God associate us with the Household in this world and the next!⁹⁷

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from Hārith A'war Hamedani, 'Amr Ibn Hārith, and Abu Ayyūb about Imam Ali that when the Imam was returning from the Battle of Šiffin, he stopped at Yumnā al-Sawād (to the east of Iraq). A monk who was living there said: "No one dismounts here unless he is the successor of a messenger and struggles in the way of God." Ali said:

فَأَنَا سَيِّدُ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ، وَبِئْسَ سَيِّدُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ.

"I am the chief of the successors, so am I the successor of the chief of the messengers."

The monk said: "Therefore it is you who have lost hair on your head among the Quraysh, and it is you who are the successor of Muhammad! Do accept my embracing of Islam and my covenant; I have found your attributes in the Bible. It is you who, in the mosque of Barāthā, will come to the house of Maryam and the land of Jesus."

Imam Ali said: "Do sit down, O Ḥubāb!" The monk said: "There! It was another sign of your being a successor!" Then the Imam told him: "O Ḥubāb, do forsake this cell and build a mosque in its place." Ḥubāb took his advice and before long changed it into a mosque and joined Ali in Kūfa. He lived in Kūfa until Imam Ali was martyred, and then he returned to the mosque of Barāthā.

There is another hadith that the monk said: "I have read that some great men and Muhammad, the Messenger of the unlettered nations and the Seal of the Prophets, will pray in this place." The monk said more about the event, and then he said: "So he who gets to know that Prophet must follow that Light that he has brought with him. This very Light, who is the successor of the Prophet in the end times, will plant a tree [religion] in this land, and its fruits will never become rotten [will remain]."

In the hadith of Zādhān it states that Imam Ali said to the monk: "Where do you get your water from?" He said: "From the river Tigris." The Imam asked: "Why do you not dig a well here to draw water from it?" The monk said: "I have already dug one, but the water is bitter." The Imam said: "Now dig another one." He did what the Imam commanded, and this time its water was sweet. The Imam said: "O Ḥubāb, let your drink come from this well, and this mosque will remain safe forever. Anyone who damages this mosque and cuts down the palms around it will face a great loss!"

It is recorded in the hadith of Muhammad Ibn Qays that Imam Ali went to that spot and pounded the ground once, and all of a sudden a spring gushed out. Then he said: "This is the spring of Maryam; dig this spot for about eight and a half meters. They dug in the earth, but in the middle they noticed a big white rock, so the Imam said: "Right here Maryam put ʿĪsā down from her shoulder, and Maryam prayed on this spot." Then Ali set up that white rock there and prayed in that direction. He stayed there for four days.

It has been narrated by Imam Bāqir that Imam Ali said that: "This is the very spring that gushed out for Maryam; do dig it for eight-and-a-half meters," and when they did what the Imam had commanded, they found a big white rock. In another hadith it is narrated that the messengers had prayed in that holy place. Imam Bāqir said: "We have gathered here, but before that, His Excellency ʿĪsā prayed there." There is hadith that the Prophet Abraham also prayed there.

It is narrated in a hadith that Imam Ali called out in Hebrew: "O spring, do come close to me." On another occasion when the Imam was passing by that spring, he noticed that huge thistle bushes had grown about the well. The Imam unsheathed his sword and cut

down all the thistles, saying: "Here is a grave of a messenger from among the messengers of God." Then the Imam pointed the direction to Qibla and they all prayed toward that direction.

In his elegy, 'Awnī has composed a poem on the attributes of the Mosque of Barāthā:

وَقُلْتُ: هَذَا كَانَ بَيْتًا لِرَسَمٍ وَذَلِكَ ضَعِيفٌ فِي الْأَسَانِيدِ أَعْوَجَ 1
وَلَكِنَّهُ بَيْتٌ لَيْسَ بِنَبِيٍّ مِنْ مَرْتَمٍ وَلِلْأَنْبِيَاءِ الزُّفَرُ مَشْوَى وَمَنْزُجٌ 2
وَلِلْأَوْصِيَاءِ الطَّاهِرِينَ مَقَامُهُمْ عَلَى غَايِرِ الْأَيَّامِ وَالْحُسَى أَنْجَ 3
يَسْمَعِينَ مُوَصًى يَتَدَسَّعِينَ مُرْسَلٍ جِبَاهُهُمْ فِيهَا سُجُودًا تَسْجُ 4
وَأَخِيرُهُمْ فِيهَا صَلَوةٌ إِمَامَنَا عَلَى بَدَا جَاءَ الْحَدِيثُ التَّخْفُ 5⁹⁸

And you said that Barāthā was a house for Maryam
This [statement] is weak, and there is crookedness in it,
However, Barāthā was the house of 'Īsā, the son of Maryam
And so was it for the bright messengers a place to rest
And for the pure messengers and their successors, during the long pe-
riod of time, it was a place to settle and rest.
It was for 70 successors of 70 messengers who prostrated so much there
that their foreheads bled!
And the last one who prayed there was our Imam, Ali, and there is au-
thentic hadith on this subject.

Amongst the unseen information of the Imam is the event that took place on the way to Šīrīn between him and the Christian monk, when the Imam broke asunder the rock and water gushed out swiftly.

The great historians have mentioned the events of this occasion, and Khaṭīb has explained it in *Tārīkh Baghdad*, and we have also mentioned it in vol. 4, lessons 46–51, of this series *Knowing the Imams*,⁹⁹ but now we will explain it in detail from *Irshād* of al-Mufid.

Mufid says:

And this is of the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali that the historians have mentioned, and this is well known to the Shi'ā and the Sunni scholars; even the poets have composed elegies, the orators have spoken about it, and the most learned have narrated it. This is about the news of that monk in the land of Karbalā and the great rock—the information is so vital that we are obliged to mention it here.

Some people have narrated that when Imam Ali set out for Siffin, on the way there, his soldiers got very thirsty; they had shared all their drinking water, and were quite hopeless of finding any water. His companions went in search of some water here and there in the desert but they found no sign of any springs or wells around. The Imam gathered them to the road and commanded them to follow him. They dragged their feet, and before long, they noticed a monk, a Christian monk, of the main path standing in front of his cell. The Holiness turned toward him and all stood on the vast land close to his old cell. The Imam sent his page to the monk to tell him that they were going to stay there for a while and he wanted to see him. The monk then moved toward Imam Ali.

The Imam asked him: "By the way, is there any water around for my men to drink and quench their thirst?" The monk said: "In this place I am living there is not any water, and the nearest place to get water is at least three kilometers. For my part, every month I go there and fetch some water to satisfy my thirst."

Imam Ali turned to his men and said: "Now, did you hear what the monk said?" They said: "Yes, we heard well. Now do you command us to walk there for the water and have some before our lives come to an end?"

Imam Ali said: "You need not walk such a long distance. Now, turn your faces towards the direction of Mecca and look right there, close to the cell of the monk. Some of you go there and dig in that spot I am pointing to." A few soldiers went there and began digging in the spot where the Imam had directed them to dig. They had not dug too deep when they noticed a big rock.

They said: "O Master of the Faithful, there is huge rock there that we cannot move away!" The Imam said: "That is the very place we are looking for; the rock is just on the water. If you move it a little away you will notice the water running under it." All the strong men in the army went to help. They tried and did their best to move the rock a little away, but in the end they could not. It was too difficult to budge it even an inch. When the Imam saw that they were all struggling hopelessly, he dismounted from his animal, rolled up his sleeves, and placed his two hands under the rock, and with a slight jerk pushed the rock away, and the army caught sight of the pure running water. All the men rushed to the fresh water and began drinking it. It was the purest and freshest water they had drunk during their journey.

The Imam said: "Now, besides what you drink here, take enough water with you for your needs on the way to our destination." Next the Imam went toward the rock, drew it close to the water, and put it over the water in its original position. Then he commanded his companions to pour

some soil over it. In the meantime, the monk was standing on the roof of his cell and watching what was going on.

When the monk saw all that was going on there, he was very surprised at what was happening in front of his eyes, and he shouted: "O men! Do help me to come down there." The army went to his aid and brought him down from the top of the cell. The monk stood before Imam Ali and said: "You are a chosen messenger!" The Imam answered that he was not. The monk said: "If you are not a messenger, then you are an angel!" Again the Imam answered that he was not. The monk asked: "Then who are you?"

The Imam said:

أَنَا وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ

"I am the successor of the Messenger of God, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, the Seal of the Messengers." The monk said: "Then lend me your hand so that I may swear allegiance to you and embrace Islam through you." Imam Ali drew his hand towards him and told him: "Now, recite the testimonies!"

The monk said:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَأَحَقُّ النَّاسِ بِالْأَمْرِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ.

"I testify that there is no god beside God. He is alone and there is no partner for Him. I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. And I testify that you are the successor of the Prophet of God and are the most right one for the affairs of the people after him."

Imam Ali instructed him and made him responsible for the conditions of Islam, saying that:

مَا الَّذِي دَعَاكَ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ بَعْدَ طَوِيلِ مُقَامِكَ فِي هَذَا الدِّينِ عَلَى الْخِلَافِ.

"Now let me know what made you embrace Islam after years of being a monk and living in this cell."

The monk said:

This cell was built for the one who could find this rock buried under the earth with fresh water running under it. Prior to me, there was another learned monk staying here for years for only this purpose; however, he was not so lucky as to find such a man. Then God Almighty trusted this great reward to me. We have read it in our Book, and have heard from our scholars, that there exists a spring in this

territory and there is a big rock over it. The only secret was that we did not know the exact spot of the spring.

Then, the monk continued:

So there must be a Guardian of God on the earth to invite people to the right, and to do extraordinary things such as moving this rock and finding the spring. Therefore, when I saw you could do what I was expecting for a long time, I found it my responsibility to embrace Islam and swear allegiance to someone who is going to be master from now on. So I believe in you, and you are going to be the Guardian as well.

When Imam Ali heard what the monk said, he wept, and while the tears were running down his face, he said:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ أَكُنْ عَنْهُ مَنِيًّا. الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي كَتَبَ فِي كِتَابِهِ مَذْكُورًا.

"Praise belongs to God, the One by Whom I was not forgotten; praise belongs to God that I have been mentioned in His Books."

Then Imam Ali called the people to come together, and he told them: "Do listen to what this brother of yours says." All of them listened to what the monk who had just embraced Islam was saying, and then they praised God for His guiding the man to Islam. And they praised God that their knowledge was increased through Ali. Then all of them together left the place for Syria, and the monk was also among them. In Syria the monk was martyred along with those who had the honor of being martyrs there.

Imam Ali himself took the responsibility of giving him the final ritual wash and burying him. He prayed over his corpse and asked Almighty God to bestow His mercy upon him. Ever since then, whenever he was reminded, the Imam would say: "He was actually a master among us; he can even be called my guardian. There is no veil between us two; only our bodies are different but our souls are together."¹⁰⁰

Up to here, Shaykh Mufid recounts this hadith, and then he continues:

There are some miracles in this hadith: one is the unseen knowledge, the second is the power of the Imam who broke the old custom, and finally there is the priority of the Imam among all the nations. In addition, there is his being mentioned in the divine books. It is exactly as God Almighty states:

ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ.¹⁰¹

"This is their example in the Torah and the Bible."

Concerning this matter, Sayyid Ismā'il Ibn Muhammad Ḥimyarī, in his elegy *Bā'iyyah Mudhahhaba*, says:

- وَقَدْ سَرَى فَبَالَيْسَى، بَلَيْلَةً تَهْدِي الْبُحَارَ بِكُنْ تَلَا فِي مَوْكِبِ 1
 حَتَّى أَتَى مُتَّكِلًا فِي كَانِمٍ أَلْقَى قَوَاعِدَ بَقَاعٍ مُجْدِبِ 2
 بَلْبِدٍ لَيْسَ بِمَيْتٍ بَلْهُيَ عَامِرًا غَيْرَ الْوُحُوشِ وَغَيْرِ أَصْلَحِ أَشْيَبِ 3
 فَدَنَى فَصَاحَ بِهِ فَافْرَنْتَ مَا بِلَا كَالْأَسْرِ فَوْقَ غُطَيَّةٍ مِنْ مَرْقَبِ 4
 هَلْ قُرْبَ قَانِيكَ الَّذِي بَوَّأْتَهُ مَاءُ بَصَابٍ هَلَّا: مَا مِنْ مَشْرَبِ 5
 إِلَّا بِمَاءَةٍ فَرَحْتَيْنِ وَمَنْ قَا بِالْمَاءِ بَيْنَ نَعْيٍ وَفِي سَنَسِبِ 6
 كَفَى الْإِعْدَاءَ غُرُوعًا فَاجْتَلَى مَلَأَتْهُ تَبَرُّقُ كَالْجَيْنِ اللَّحْمِ 7
 كَلَّ أَفْلُوهُمَا إِنْ كُنَّ أَنْ تَقْلَبُوا تُزَوِّدُوا وَلَا تُزَوِّدُونَ إِنْ لَزَّ قَلْبُ 8
 فَاعْضَوْضُوا إِنْ قَلْبُهُمَا كُنْتُ مِنْهُمْ مَنَعَ صَبْرَهُ لَزَّ رَكِبِ 9
 حَتَّى إِذَا غِيَّبَهُمْ أَهْوَى لَهَا كَهَامَتِي تَرِدُ الْمَالِ تَقْلَبِ 10
 فَكَلَّهَا كَرَهُ بِكُنْ حَزُونٍ عَمِلَ الذَّرَاعَ دَعَى بِهَا فِي مَلَبِ 11
 فَتَقَامُ مِنْ مَحْمِيٍّ تَسْلِيلًا عَذَابًا يَدْعَى عَلَى الْأَلْدُ الْأَغْنَبِ 12
 حَتَّى إِذَا شَرِيَّ وَاجْبَحَارُ دَعَا وَمَعَى هَلْكَ مَكَلَّهَا لَزَّ قُرْبِ 102 13

As Imam Ali preferred the vast road in the desert to go to Siffin, but not the road that was on the bank of the large river Euphrates, his army got thirsty. On the other hand, as the road from Kūfa to Syria was via the land of Karbalā, that event of the monk, the rock, and the spring for the drinking water happened there. Sayyid Ḥimyarī has composed this elegy for that occasion:

1. And it was certain that Imam Ali, on his way to Syria, together with his cavaliers and the infantry passed by the land of Karbalā.
2. Until he went to the monk who had built his cell in the arid and barren land.
3. He walked towards the monk while seeing no signs of living things around, or any animals, except the old monk with gray hair.
4. The Master of the Believers got closer to the monk, who called him while standing on top of his cell, like an eagle on the summit of the mountain, without bending, looking down at the caller. The Master

of the Faithful asked him whether there was any water around his cell.

5. "Is there any sign of water here where you are living?" The monk answered that there was not a single drop of water all about that land.
6. "Except you look for water about three kilometers away; by the way, who is going to bring water here in this hot, sandy territory? This is a poor land of drought!"
7. Therefore Imam Ali pulled the reins of the horse and moved further away in the thick, soft sand where, all of a sudden, he noticed a rock shining like silver among the pebbles.
8. He called his men to him and commanded them to turn the rock over. "If you can move it away, then you can drink water, but if you cannot move it, then there is no drinking water for you."
9. All of them came together and tried to push the rock a bit away, but it was hopeless. The rock remained stable in its place, "as hard as a rock"! No matter how hard the strongest men tried, it did not move an inch.
10. It took a long time, and the rock made all of them hopeless. It was then that Imam Ali dismounted from his horse, pushed away the strongest men among his army, and then rested his two hands under the edge of the rock and with no difficulty moved it away.
11. You would imagine it was a small ball in the hands of a skillful and strong man, throwing it here and there on the playground.
12. He let all his men drink of the water running under the rock; it was fresh and pure, quenching the thirst of the men looking for water in the middle of the desert. It was the most delicious they had ever had!
13. When all the men had drunk of that water, Imam Ali put the rock back in its place and left the place. He put it back as if nothing had happened there.

After this elegy, Sayyid Ḥimyarī says:

أَغْنِيْ اِنَّ فَاطِمَةَ الرَّسُوْلِ وَمَنْ يُقْلُ فِي فَضْلِهِ وَقَالَ لَنْ يَكْذِبَ 14

لَيْسَتْ بِأَلْفَةِ عَشِيْرٍ عَشِيْرٍ مَا قَدْ كُنْ اَعْطِيَهُ مَقَالَهُ مُطَيَّبٍ 15

صَهْرُ الرَّسُوْلِ وَجَارُهُ فِي مَسْجِدٍ طَهْرَ طَيْبَةِ الرَّسُوْلِ مُطَيَّبٍ 16 ¹⁰³

14. I mean he is the son of Fātimah, the daughter of Asad, and he is the successor of the Prophet of God; and whoever says a good thing about his attributes, he is right and he never lies.
- 15-16. No matter how much a skillful orator speaks about the brother-in-law of the Prophet of God and recounts his attributes, he can never exhaust all that he said and did in the holy town of Medina.

At the end, after mentioning some elegies from Ḥimyarī, Shaykh Mufid in *Irshād* says:

Ibn Maymūn has added the following elegy.

وَأَمَّا زَاهِبًا سَرِيعَةً مُجْزِيَةً فِيهَا وَآمَنَ بِالْوَصِيِّ الْخَيْرِ 1
وَمَعَى شَهِيدًا صَادِقًا فِي نَفْسِهِ أَكْرَمَ بِهِ مِنْ زَاهِبٍ مُتْرَكٍ 2
أَعْنِي ابْنَ فَاطِمَةَ الْوَصِيِّ وَمَنْ يَقُلْ فِي فَضْلِهِ وَصَالِهِ لَنْ يَكْذِبَ 3
رَجُلًا كَلَّا مَرَّيْنِي سَامَ وَمَا حَامُ لَهُ بَابٌ وَلَا بَابُ 4
مَنْ لَا يَفِرُّ وَلَا يَمُوتُ فِي مَعْرَكَةٍ إِلَّا وَصَارَ مَهُ الْخَضِيبُ الْمَضْرِبُ 5¹⁰⁴

1. The signs [that took place] in the case of the monk are miraculous; it was why the monk swore allegiance to the noble successor and embraced the true new faith.
2. The monk was martyred in the presence of His Excellency, and he was correct in his choice and victory—how great was the monk!
3. I mean the son of Fāṭimah, and whoever says anything good of his nobility and superiority has spoken the truth.
4. Ali is the successor of a man whose ancestor is Sām, the son of Noah, and another son of Noah, Ḥām, was neither his father nor his grandfather.
5. Ali is the man who never flees away, and in the battlefield he is the only one who attacks the enemy and starts killing.

Further, Shaykh Mufid says:

Among the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali is the incident that Husayn Ibn Maḥbūb narrates from Thābit Thumālī, he in turn quoting Abu Ishāq Sabīʿī from Suwayd Ibn Ghafala, that a man went to Imam Ali and said: "O Ali, I was passing the Wādī al-Qurā where I noticed that Khālid Ibn ʿUrfuṭa had died.¹⁰⁵ Now, you pray for him and ask God for His forgiveness." The Imam said: "Actually, he has not died and will not die until he becomes the chief of the army gone astray, and the banner-bearer of the army is Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār."¹⁰⁶

A man sitting near the pulpit stood up and said: "O Master of the Faithful, I am one of your followers, and so am I a friend and lover of yours." The Holiness asked: "Who are you?" The man answered: "I am Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār." The Imam stated:

إِنَّكَ أَنْ تَحْمِلَهَا، وَتَضِلَّهَا فَتَدْخُلَ بِهَا مِنْ هَذَا الْبَابِ وَأَوْتَايَدِي إِلَى بَابِ الْفِيلِ

"It is not for you to carry the flag of the army gone astray; however, you will bear it in the end! And you will bring that flag to this place through that door." (And the Imam pointed to a door of the mosque of Kūfa.)

After Imam Ali and then Imam Hasan were martyred, Imam Husayn revolted, and then that tragic event of Karbalā happened. Ibn Ziyād sent Omar Ibn Sa'd to fight against Imam Husayn. Khālid Ibn 'Urfuṭa was in the first line of Sa'd's army, and Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār was the bearer of the flag. It was he who took the banner of the battle inside the mosque through the Bāb al-Fil. This account is also beneficial to the scholars and the narrators we have mentioned. This account is famous among the people of Kūfa and is known to almost everyone.¹⁰⁷

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated this hadith in the same way as it is in *al-Manāqib* from Abu al-Faraj Isfahani in the section of *Akhbār al-Hasan*,¹⁰⁸ and Majlisī has narrated it in *Biḥār al-Anwār* from A'mash and Ibn Maḥbūb, from Thumālī and Sabī'i. All of them have narrated it from Suwayd Ibn Ghafḥa and from Abu al-Faraj Isfahani.¹⁰⁹

Majlisī has narrated it in a quite different style in *Biḥār al-Anwār* from *al-Ikhtisāṣ* by Shaykh Mufid and *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt* of Ṣaffār. He has quoted these two respectable scholars: Abdullah Ibn Muhammad from Ibn Maḥbūb and Abu Ḥamzah from Suwayd Ibn Ghafḥa, saying:

I was in the presence of the Master of the Faithful when a man came in and said: "O Master of the Faithful, I have come to see you from Wādi al-Qurā to inform that Khālid Ibn 'Urfuṭa is dead."

Imam Ali said: "No, he has not died." The man repeated his words. However, Imam Ali said: "He has not died. By God Who has my soul in His hand, he has not died."

The man repeated his words for the third time, and the Imam said the same.

The man said: "O Lord! I am telling you that he has died, but you insist that he is alive!"

Imam Ali said: "By God in Whose hand is my soul, Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār will not die until the army of the oppressors revolts, and he carries the banner of the army in the front line!"

Later, when Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār had heard what Imam Ali said, he went to the Imam and said: "I have come to you to say that by God, I am going

to swear allegiance to you as one of your followers, and I am loyal to what I promise. I have heard that you have said something in my absence; I am not such a man; I do not have in mind such a thing as carrying the banner of the oppressors!"

The Imam stated:

إِنْ كُنْتَ حَبِيبَ بْنِ جَارٍ لَتَمْلِكُنَا.

"If you are the very Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār, then you are certainly going to carry it!" Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār turned his face and immediately left the room. It was when the Imam said for the second time: "If you are the same Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār, then you are going to carry the flag of the oppressors!"

Abu Ḥamzah Thumālī, the narrator of the hadith from Suwayd Ibn Ghafḷa, says: "By God Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār did not die until Omar Ibn Sa'd rose to fight against Husayn Ibn Ali, and Omar Ibn Sa'd chose Khālid Ibn 'Urfuṭa as the chief of his army, and then he trusted the flag of the army to Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār!"

After explaining this event, Majlisī says: "Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has mentioned this event in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, from the book *al-Ghārāt* by Ibn Hilāl Thaqaḥī, from Ibn Maḥbūb, quoting Thumālī, from Suwayd Ibn Ghafḷa."¹¹⁰

So through the histories, we learn that the murderers of the master of the martyrs, Husayn, were among the followers of Imam Ali in Kūfa, such as Ḥajjār Ibn Abḥur, Shabath Ibn Rib'ī, Muhammad Ibn Ash'ath, and some others. Each one was the chief and commander of four thousand fighters. With such huge armies, they stood against the Imam to fight him only for the wealth of this world and the reward Yazīd had promised to give them! They were all equipped with arms before the innocent and lonely Imam. The empty promise of Yazīd and the trifling wealth of this world had blinded them all. They could not distinguish the right from the wrong! They were so beguiled that they had forgotten the sermons of the Imam and his advice against the enemies!

It is quite true: if a person falls in love with something, either bad or good, he becomes blind to the world, and forgets his divine responsibility! He cannot see anything except his beloved. But when the screen is drawn back, he can see the truth, but it is too late!

Perhaps when Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār went to Imam Ali, he was telling the truth, and he was one of his followers, and did not realize that one day he would become the flag-bearer of the army of Yazīd and Omar Ibn Sa'd gone astray. However, Almighty God assesses His slaves in such a way that their secret and inner nature become

apparent, and then those who are the people of Hell go to Hell, and the ones of Paradise go to Heaven.

Barā' Ibn 'Āzib was one of the companions of the Prophet and was also a sincere supporter of Imam Ali, but at the time of the martyrdom of Sayyid al-Shuhadā (Imam Husayn), he did not help him. He was regretful and repentant until the end of his life.

Shaykh Mufid and Ibn Shahr Āshūb have narrated from Ismā'īl Ibn Ṣabī, Yaḥyā Ibn Musāfir 'Ābidī, and Ismā'īl Ibn Ziyād that once Ali said to Barā' Ibn 'Āzib:

يَا بَرَاءُ، يُقْتَلُ ابْنِي الْحُسَيْنُ وَأَنْتَ حَيٌّ لَا تَنْصُرُهُ.

"O Barā', my son Husayn will be killed, but you will not help him!"

Then, when Husayn was martyred, Barā' Ibn 'Āzib kept saying: "By God, the Master of the Faithful was quite right. Husayn was martyred, but I did not help him." Therefore, he was sorry and regretted his failure up until the end of his life.¹¹¹

Further, Shaykh Mufid has stated in *Irshād* from Othman Ibn Qays 'Āmiri, from Jābir Ibn Ḥurr Juwayrīya Ibn Mus-hir¹¹² 'Abdī:

When we were accompanying Ali to Ṣiffin, we reached Tufuf of Karbalā, and there Imam Ali stopped at a place with the army around him. He cast a glance to the right and then to the left, and weeping, he said:

هَذَا وَاللَّهِ مَنَاقِبُ رُكَبِهِمْ وَتَوْنِجُ سَيْلِهِمْ.

"By God, this is the very spot for their camels to stop, and they being martyred!"

They asked the Imam: "Where is this place?" He answered:

هَذَا كَرْبَلَاءُ، يُقْتَلُ فِيهِ قَوْمٌ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ.

"This is Karbalā, and some people will be killed here and will enter Paradise without being questioned."

He said this and set out immediately; however, those around him did not understand what he said until later, when the event of Karbalā happened and Husayn with his loyal companions was martyred. It was then that those who had heard what he said understood the import of his pronouncement.

So this is another of his predictions of unseen news, informing others about a thing of which there was no sign, and no one knew what was going to happen.¹¹³

Juwayriya Ibn Mus-hir 'Abdī was one of the great companions of Ali, and the Imam had taught him the knowledge of deaths and misfortunes. He had a clear and illuminating conscience, and through that he could read some unknown events. He was so dear to Ali, however, that before the event of Karbalā, because of his excessive love for Imam Ali, they chopped off his hands and then hanged him! Concerning this, in *Irshād*, in the section on miracles and unseen news, Mufid says:

According to what the scholars and the learned men have narrated, Juwayriya Ibn Mus-hir stood in front of Kūfa's Dar al-'Imāra (building of the government) and said: "Where is the Master of the Faithful?" They answered that he was in bed. Then from the tall walls of the Palace he shouted:

أَيْهَا النَّاسِ اسْمِعُوا، فَإِنَّ نَفْسِي بِيَدِ الْفَضْلِ مَضْرُوبَةٌ عَلَى رَأْسِكُمْ مِنْهَا يَخْرُجُ دَمٌ، كَمَا أَخْبَرْتُمَا بِذَلِكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ.

"O you who are asleep, wake up! By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, you will be stricken on the head so hard that your face will be covered with blood, as you yourself have already informed us!"

Imam Ali heard the cry of Juwayriya from outside the building. Then from inside he said in a loud voice:

أَقْبِلْ يَا جُورِيَّةُ حَتَّى أُحْدِثَ لَكَ بِحَدِيثِكَ

"O Juwayriya, come in; as you informed me of the blood running on my face, I also tell you what will happen to you."

Juwayriya went to him. Imam Ali told him:

وَأَنْتَ وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِ الْفَضْلِ إِلَى الْمَلِكِ الزُّنَيْمِ وَلَيُفْطِنَنَّ بِكَ وَرَجُلَكَ ثُمَّ لَيُصَلِّبَنَّكَ تَحْتَ جَذْعِ كَلْبَرٍ.

"By God, in Whose hand my soul is, they will also take you to that stone-hearted bastard who will chop off both your hands, and then you will be hanged under a palm tree of an unknown believer!"

A long period of time passed after that event, and it was after the demise of the Prophet, which was actually at the time of Mu'āwiyah, when Ziyād Ibn Abih was chosen as the governor of Kūfa by Mu'āwiyah. He cut off the hands and feet of Juwayriya and then hanged him from a palm tree of Ibn Muka'bar. The palm tree was

very tall, and Juwayriya was hanged on a lower branch, as the Imam had said that he would be hanged under a palm tree.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from Abu Ḥaḥaṣ Omar Ibn Muhammad Zayyāt that once Imam Ali said to Musayyib Ibn Najīyyah:

يَا بَيْتُكُمْ زَاكِبُ الدَّغِيلَةِ يُشَدُّ حَقْوُهَا بِوَضِيئِهَا، لَمْ يَنْقُصِ نَفْتَايْنِ سَجٍّ وَلَا عُمُرَةٍ فَيَقْتُلُوهُ يَوْمَ يُدْعَى الْحُسَيْنُ عَلَيْهِ
السلام

"A betrayed man will come to you in haste, and when he has not yet fulfilled his *hajj* and lesser *hajj* rites, they will kill him." He meant the betrayed man was Husayn.

The story goes that Husayn was martyred before fulfilling the *hajj* rites, and he left Mecca on the day of Tarwīyah.¹¹⁵

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has also narrated that Imam Ali addressed the people of Kūfa saying:

كَيْفَ أَنْتُمْ إِذَا تَزَلَّ بِكُمْ ذُرِّيَّةُ نَبِيِّكُمْ فَهَمَدْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ فَهَتَّكْتُمُوهُ؟ قَالُوا: مَتَاذَ اللَّهِ لَنْ أَتَاكَ اللَّهُ فِي ذَلِكَ لَتَبْلَوُنَّ
عَذْرًا. هَلَالٌ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:
فَمُؤَذَّرُكُمْ فِي التَّوْبَةِ وَغَزَاؤُكُمْ لَا نَجَاءَ وَلَا عَذْرَ.¹¹⁶

"What will be your state when the offspring of the Prophet comes to you but you deliberately rise against him and kill him?" They said: "We will take refuge in God! If God appears to us then we have nothing to defend ourselves against Him!" Then His Excellency recited this line of elegy:

They lured him into the trap and beguiled him, and then killed him.
He had in mind to release himself; however, neither was he released nor was his excuse accepted!

Similarly, Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from *Musnad Muṣīlī* of Abdullah Ibn Yahyā, quoting his father:

On the way to the Battle of Ṣiffīn, Imam Ali reached Naynawā, and he called out:

أَصْبِرْ يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بِسَطِّ الْقَرَارِ هَلْكَ: وَمَا ذِي؟ فَذَكَرَ مُضَرَّعَ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بِالْكَفِّ¹¹⁷

"O Aba Abdillah, be patient at the River of Euphrates." I had the honor of asking: "O Master of the Faithful, let us know the story." Then the Imam told us the event of the martyrdom of Husayn in the territory of Taff.

In the book *al-Shāfi fi al-Ansāb* it is recounted that when Imam Ali spoke of this matter in the land of Naynawā, one of his companions said he wanted to mark out that land. When I wanted to do so, I did not find anything nearby but a piece of camel's bone, so I dropped that bone there to be a marker to identify the land later on. When Husayn and his companions were martyred, I found that piece of bone at the site of the murder.¹¹⁸

In *Biḥār al-Anwār*,¹¹⁹ from *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, from Naṣr Ibn Muẓāḥim, with his chains from 'Orwah, Naṣr says:

I went to Sa'd Ibn Waḥab and asked him about the hadith that he had already narrated to us from Ali Ibn Abi Tālib. He said:

Yes, it was Mikhnaf Ibn Salīm who sent me to Ali when he was leaving for Ṣiffin. I went to him; he was in Karbalā. When I met him, he was speaking to a group of people while pointing at something and saying: "Here it is, just here." A man asked him what he meant by saying so. Imam Ali said:

قَالَ آلُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَزِلْ هُنَا، قَوْلُ لَكُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ.

"The very noble and respectable offspring of Muhammad will land here, so woe upon them for you and woe upon you then!"

The man asked to know what the exact meaning of that was. He stated: "Woe upon you who are going to kill them, and woe upon you that for your killing them, God will put you in the fire."

Naṣr says:

This clause is also narrated in another way:

قَوْلُ لَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ، وَقَوْلُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ.

The man said:

We understood the meaning of

قَوْلُ لَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ

but did not understand what the phrase

وَقَوْلُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ

means.

The Imam replied: "It means you will see that they are killing them but you will have no power to defend them."

Further, Naṣr Ibn Muzāḥim has narrated from Saʿīd Ibn Ḥakīm ʿAbasī, from Ḥakam Hasan Ibn Kathīr and his father:

Ali went to Karbalā, and stayed there for a while. Someone said to the Imam: "Here is the land of Karbalā." The Imam said: "It really means 'Karbu-balā,' and the exact meaning is the land of sorrow and disaster!" And then he pointed at a certain place and said: "That is the place where they will stop and dismount from their camels!" Then he pointed at another place and said: "That is the place where the enemies will kill them." Soon after he mentioned this, he set out for Sābāt.¹²⁰

Further, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has explained in *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* from Naṣr Ibn Muzāḥim in the book of *Ṣiffīn*, with his chains from Harthama Ibn Salīm:

We were in the army in the presence of Ali in the Battle of Ṣiffīn. When we reached Karbalā, we had the congregational prayer with the Imam. When the prayer was over, the Imam took some soil in his hand, smelled it, and then said:

وَأَهْلًا لَكَ يَا ثَنِيَّةُ، لَيَحْضُرَنَّ مِنْكَ قَوْمٌ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ¹²¹

"Excellent indeed, it is very strange! You are such soil that some people will be united on the Day of Resurrection; they will go to Heaven without being questioned!"

When Harthama returned from the battle to his wife Jardā', the daughter of Samīr, who was a sincere follower of Ali, he told her the event of Karbalā and then asked her if she was not surprised about her friend, Abu al-Hasan. He continued:

When we entered Karbalā, the Imam took a full bowl of earth from the ground. He smelled it and said:

وَأَهْلًا لَكَ أَيُّهَا الثَّنِيَّةُ لَيَحْضُرَنَّ مِنْكَ قَوْمٌ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

"Excellent indeed, it is very strange! You are such a soil that some people will be united on the Day of Resurrection here; they will go to Heaven without being questioned."

Having heard the strange event and the prediction of the Imam, his wife, Jardā', said:

دَعَاكَ مِنْكَ أَيُّهَا الرَّجُلُ، فَإِنَّ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَمْ يَقُلْ إِلَّا حَقًّا

"O man, leave me on my own; Imam Ali speaks only true words!"

Harthama says:

When ‘Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyād sent an army against Husayn, I was also in that army. When I arrived before Husayn and his companions, I recognized the same place we had been with Ali, and I noticed the site where Ali had taken a handful of dust, and I remembered what he had said at that time. It was then that I came to know that my trip there was unpleasant. So I dismounted from my horse and went closer to Husayn. I stood before him, greeted him, and then told him the very story that I had heard from his father in the same house.

Husayn said: “Have you come here to help or to fight with us?” I said: “O son of the Prophet of God, I am here neither to help nor to fight with you, because I have left my wife and children behind and I am afraid that Ibn Ziyād may do something wrong to them.” Imam Husayn said:

كَوْلُ مَنْ بَاحَتْهُ لَا تَرَى مَقْتَلًا، فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ بِيَدِهِ لَا يَرَى الْيَوْمَ مَقْتَلًا أَحَدٌ ثُمَّ لَا يُعِينُنَا إِلَّا
دَخَلَ النَّارَ

“So turn back so as not to see us murdered, because by Him in Whose Hand is the soul of Husayn today, no one who witnesses our being killed can stand impartial, for he will enter the Fire!”

Harthama says: “I was ashamed, and then escaped swiftly in order not to see them being killed!”¹²²

In *Kharāyij*, Rāwandī has narrated from Imam Bāqir, quoting his father:

Ali was passing by Karbalā in haste, his eyes full of tears, and turning down his face, while he was telling his companions:

هَذَا مَتَاخُ رِجْلِهِمْ، وَهَذَا مَلْقَى رِجَالِهِمْ، هَهُنَا مَرَاقُ دِمَائِهِمْ، طَوْبِي لَكَ مِنْ ثُبَّةٍ عَلَيْهِمُ اثْرَاقُ دِمَاءِ
الْأَجْبَةِ

“This is the place where they will dismount their camels, and there is where their horses will fall down, and this is the spot where their blood will be shed. Happy soil you are that the pure blood of the beloved will flow onto you!”

Further, Imam Bāqir stated that when Ali took the people out from of Kūfa to fight with the enemies, he was still on the way, about one or two miles to Karbalā, when he separated from the army, walked to the side road, called Maqd hafān, and then stopped there and said:

قُلْ فِيهَا مَلَائِكَتِي وَمَا تَسْبِيحُ كُلُّهُمْ هُتَدَاءُ، وَمَتَاخُ رُكْبٍ وَمَصَارِعُ عَشَاقٍ، هُتَدَاءُ لَا يَنْبَغُ مِنْ كَانَ قَبْلَهُمْ، وَلَا يَلْحَقُهُمْ مَنْ يَتَدُهُمْ.

"Two hundred messengers as well as two hundred of their sons have been martyred on this site. This is the place for the beloved to dismount their camels and to be martyred altogether. Neither the position nor the rank of those who have been martyred before are like these, nor will the positions and ranks of the martyrs be like them afterwards."

Further, from 'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā, with his three combined chains from Imam Riḍā, he has narrated from his grandfather, Imam Ali, that he said:

كَأَنِّي بِالْصُّورِ قَدْ فُيِّدْتُ حَوْلَ قَبْرِ الْحُسَيْنِ، وَكَأَنِّي بِالْحَامِلِ تَخْرُجُ مِنَ الْفُكُوفَةِ إِلَى قَبْرِ الْحُسَيْنِ، وَلَا تَذُوبُ الْيَلِيلُ وَالْأَيَّامُ حَتَّى يُسَارَ الْيَوْمُ مِنَ الْآلِقِ، وَذَلِكَ عِنْدَ انْقِطَاعِ مَلِكِ بَنِي مَرْوَانَ.

"It is as if now I see they have raised high palaces around the grave of Husayn, as if I witness the camel-litters come to visit Husayn from Kūfa. The nights and days will not come to an end until people from all over the world come to visit the grave of Husayn. And this will happen at the end of Banī Marwān's government."

It is not surprising that when Imam Ali passed by Karbalā and Naynawā, he kept weeping. Before him, the Prophet had cried for Husayn and had presented Umm Salamah with a small bottle of soil from Husayn's place of martyrdom, and told her: "When you see that the soil in this bottle has changed into fresh blood, you should know that they have killed my Husayn!" The Prophet used to narrate the story of Husayn to Fāṭimah, and she would weep on account of this tragedy.

Qāḍī Jalīs, a poet of the sixth century AH, whose complete name is Abu al-Ma'ālī 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Husayn Ibn Ḥubāb Aghlabī, has composed the following elegy concerning the event:

لَمَّا قُتِلَ الْكَلْبُ إِذْ خَدَّلَ الْمَصَاحِبَ وَالنَّصِيرُ 1
وَأَقَامَ فِي كَرْتَلَا يَوْمَ عَمُوسٍ فَتَطِيرُ 2
دَقَّتْ لَمْ تُحْصَبِ الضَّلَالُ لِكَأَنَّمَا دَعَى النُّصَيْرُ 3
جَهْلَهُمْ لَنْ يَلْقَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ قَدْ رُمِيَ 4
أَيُّزُفُوقَ الْأَرْضِ فِي ضِدِّ دَمِ الْحُسَيْنِ وَلَا تُؤْمَرُ 5

أَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ دَرَتْ وَلَمْ تَقْذِفْهُمْ مِنْهَا حُجُورًا؟
 أَمْ كَيْفَ إِذْ مَتَّعُوهُ يَوْمَ ذَا الْمَاءِ لَمْ تَغْرِبْهُ الْبُحُورُ؟
 حَرَّمَ الزَّلَالُ عَلَيْهِ مَا خَلَقَتْ لَهُمُ الْحُجُورُ.¹²³

1. My sorrow and agony are for the murdered of Karbalā, when his close companions left him alone on his own,
2. In Karbalā, a difficult day they visited them, a day that was looking forward to take them away,
3. There came to them groups gone astray, looking proud, as if they were called to fight him!
4. It is very astonishing that apart from those who were killed, no one came to help them,
5. How can it be the blood of Husayn spreads on the ground but the ground does not mourn!
6. Can you imagine that the mountains have witnessed him being killed but they have not thrown rocks at [the enemies]?
7. And how was it that when they prevented Husayn from getting closer to water the seas were not dried,
8. The pure water was banned to him when he considered the drinks were his right and lawful to him.

Also, the below are six lines from his 20-line elegy, which we present at the end of our discussion:

حُبِّي لَكَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ يَعْصِمُنِي مِنْ كُلِّ أَلِيمٍ وَمِنْ دُخْرِي وَمِنْ حَاجِي¹
 يَا بَيْضَةَ الْحَقِّ قَوْلِي بِالْوَفَاءِ لَكُمْ وَفَاخِرِي بِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْتِ أَوْبَائِي²
 إِذَا عَلَّقْتَ بِحَبْلِ مِنْ أَبِي حَسَنِ فَكَدْ عَلَّقْتَ بِحَبْلِ فِي يَدِ اللَّهِ³
 حَتَّى الْإِلَهِيهِ الْإِسْلَامَ صَوَّبَهُ يُغْزِي عَلَى كُلِّ دِينٍ قَبْلَهُ رَاوِ⁴
 بَتَلُ الْبُحُولِ وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْدِيكَ أُنَيْتَةً مِنْ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ لَوْلَا هِيَ⁵
 نَصَّ النَّبِيَّ عَلَيْهِ فِي الْقَدِيرِ فَمَا رَاوَاهُ إِلَّا عَيْنَيْنِ دِينُهُ وَارِوِ¹²⁴

1. My affection toward the Household of the Prophet of God protects me from all sins, and they are the only pride and nobility of mine.
2. O the rightful Shi'a! Always have a belief of being loyal to them, and be proud of them in front of anyone,
3. Whenever you cling to the rope connecting you to them, you then seize the rope of God,
4. God has saved and protected Islam for the sake of them; that is why Islam is proud amongst all the religions,

5. Ali is the husband of Batūl [Fāṭimah] and if there were not Batūl, we would not have, from the Prophet, the Imams and Leaders to guide us.
6. On the Day of Ghadīr, the Prophet stipulated his Imamate and Guardianship; so nobody secluded Ali but only he who took his religion as a game!

**Lessons One Hundred Seventy-One
to One Hundred Seventy-Three**

**His Excellency's Knowledge of Suffering,
Affliction, Great Disastrous Events,
and Seditions**



LESSONS ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE TO ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-THREE

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

And blessing be upon Muhammad and his pure Household, and
may God's curse be on his enemies from now until the Day of Res-
urrection! And there is no power or strength except for the Lofty
Glorious God.

The Wise God has stated in His Glorious Book:

إِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ • خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ • إِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ • الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ • عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ
مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ يَعْلَمُ

*Read in the name of your Lord Who created, created man from a blood-clot!
Read, for your Lord is the most Generous, Who taught by means of the pen,
He taught man what he did not know (96:1-5).*

In *Tafsir al-Şāfi*, Fayḍ Kashani narrated from Qumi that this chap-
ter is the first one revealed to the Prophet. Gabriel came down to Mu-
hammad and told him: "O Muhammad, read!" The Prophet of God
asked him: "What should I read?" He said:

إِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ.

"Read in the name of your Lord Who created," that is:¹²⁵ [read in the
name of God] Who created your Eternal Light before beginning crea-
tion."

‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī has mentioned it in his *Tafsir*:

The verb "Read" includes the object "you." Since it is an imperative,
then in such a state you do not need to mention the object. Thus, the
single word "read" is a command meaning: "Read the Qur'an as the in-
spiring angel inspires you to read. When you are beginning to read, or
in the middle or at the end of your reading of it, bear in mind that the
name of your Creator is within the sentence you are reciting."

The meaning of

رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

is specific to the Divine Essence of the Creator, and is related to Lord-
ship. It is because the disbelievers used to say: "Apart from creation,
God does nothing more, because the sustaining and managing of af-
fairs are carried out by angels and those who are closer to God [the
jinn]." That is why God sent this comprehensive statement:

وَمَا الَّذِي خَلَقَ.

to make it clear that everything is in His hand. The letter

ب

("with") in the word

بِالْقَلَمِ

("with the pen") is just to show that this reading and writing is by means of the pen. This style of command is just encouraging the Prophet not to be worried; he could do the job "by" means of the pen, because he was worried about how he could read or write without schooling! In other words, the statement means: read the Book of your Creator, the same Creator Who sends you revelation, and be not afraid, because your Creator is the most Generous and Forgiving, and it is He Who instructs his creatures by means of the pen. Such a Creator is able to teach you how to read even if you have not been educated in the past. God has commanded you to read, and if He had not prepared you to do so, He would never command you to read!

Following this, the Almighty God generalized His blessing and mentioned whatever the human knew not, as He stated:

عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

"and he taught man what he did not know." This is for the sake of the Prophet and his tranquility. Reading the book includes memorizing its letters and words, even if they are not pronounced. They just pile up in the memory of the mind. Here, the purpose is to understand what the angel of revelation delivers.¹²⁶

So the complete knowledge of the Prophet was brought to him by the angel of revelation, and its recitation includes reading it, memorizing it by heart, and then acting upon its instruction.

Whatever the Prophet knew, he taught in the same way to his successor, Imam Ali: that is, the very divine knowledge that the great angel had revealed to the Prophet in the first place. After receiving the knowledge, he transferred it to Imam Ali. Imam Ali states it at the end of sermon 190, *Qāṣi'ah*:

وَقَدْ قَرَأَ اللَّهُ بِرَسُولِي إِلَهِي وَسَلَّمْ مِنْ لَدُنْ أَنْ كُنْ فَطِيمًا أَغْطَمَ مَلَكٌ مِنْ مَلَائِكَةِ سَكِينَةٍ يَسْلُكُ
بِهِ طَرِيقَ الْكَتَابِ وَخَلَسَ أَخْلَاقِي الصَّالِحِينَ لَيْلَةً وَنَهَارًا وَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَتِيهِ أَتِيعَةُ الْجَمَاعِ الْقَصِيلِ أَتْرَامِي يَرْفَعُ
لِي فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِنْ أَخْلَاقِهِ عَلَمًا وَأَمْرِي بِالْإِقْدَانِ بِهِ وَقَدْ كُنْتُ يَحَاوِرُنِي كُلَّ سَنَةٍ بِحِرَاءٍ فَأَرَاهُ وَلَا
رَأَاهُ غَيْرِي وَلَنْ يَجْمَعَ بَيْنَكَ وَاحِدٌ يُمَيِّدُنِي فِي الْإِسْلَامِ غَيْرَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمْ

خَدِيجَةَ وَأَنَا كَاتِبُهَا. أَرَى نُورَ الْوَحْيِ وَالرَّسَالَهَ، وَأَسْمِعُ رِيحَ الْوَحْيِ
وَكَذَبْتُ عَنْ رَهْةِ الشَّيْكَانِ حِينَ نَزَلَ الْوَحْيُ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا
هَذِهِ الرَّهْةُ؟ كَلَّا: هَذَا الشَّيْكَانُ أَيْسَ مِنْ عِيَالِيهِ إِنَّكَ تَسْمَعُ مَا تَسْمَعُ وَتَرَى مَا أَرَى إِلَّا أَنْتَ لَنْتَ
بِنَبِيٍّ وَلَكِنَّكَ وَهْمٌ، وَأَنْتَ كَلِمَى خَبَرِ 127

From the time of his weaning, God had put a mighty angel with him to take him along the path of high character and good behavior throughout the day and night, while I used to follow him like a young camel following in the footprints of its mother. Every day he would show me in the form of a banner some of his high traits and command me to follow them. Every year, he used to go into seclusion in the cave of Hira, where no one except me could see him. In those days, Islam did not exist in any house except that of the Prophet of God—peace and blessings of God be upon him and his descendants—and Khadijah, while I was the third after these two. I used to see and watch the effulgence of the divine revelation and message, and breathed the scent of Prophethood.

When the revelation descended on the Prophet of God—peace and blessings of God be upon him and his descendants—I heard the moaning of Satan. I said: “O Prophet of God, what is this moaning?” He replied: “This is Satan, who has lost all hope of being worshiped. O Ali, you see all that I see and you hear all that I hear, except that you are not a prophet, but you are a vicegerent and you are surely on (the path of) virtue.”

When explaining these cases, Ibn Abi al-Hadīd has said:

Ṭabari, in his *Tārīkh* and with his own chains from Minhāl Ibn Omar, and from Abdullah Ibn Abdullah, has narrated that he had said:

I heard Ali saying:

قَالَ الْكَافِرُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ أَكَاذِبٌ مُفْتَرٍ صَلَاتُ
 ١٢٨

"I am a servant of God, and so am I the brother of His Prophet and I am great in righteousness. No one except me claims this unless he is a liar. Seven years before people started to pray, I used to pray."

Apart from Tabarī's hadith, it is said:

أَنَا الصَّادِقُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَالْقَارِئُ الْأَوَّلُ، أَسْلَمْتُ قَبْلَ إِسْلَامِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَصَلَّيْتُ قَبْلَ صَلَاتِهِ بِسَبْعِ
سِنِينَ. 129

"I am the first righteous and the first Fārūq. Before Abu Bakr embraced Islam, I embraced Islam, and I started praying seven years before he did."

Here, Ibn Abi-Ḥadīd says: "As if His Excellency considered it unpleasant to mention Omar's name, he has evaluated him as not worthy to compare himself with in Islam."¹³⁰

He has also said that Faḍl Ibn ʿAbbās narrated that he had asked his father:

"Which one of his sons did the Prophet of God like more?" His father answered: "Of course he liked Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib more."

I said: "But I am asking you about his sons."

My father answered: "The Prophet of God liked Ali more than he liked all his sons, and he had excessive affection toward him. From the time when Ali was a little child, we never saw him alone; he was always with the Prophet, except when the Prophet traveled for Khadījah. We never saw a father love his children with such nobility as the Holy Prophet loved him; and we never saw any son obey his father as much as Ali obeyed the Prophet of God."¹³¹

Husayn Ibn Zayd Ibn Ali Ibn al-Husayn has narrated:

I heard my father saying:

When Ali was a child, and was being brought up in the lap of the Prophet of God, the Prophet would chew small pieces of meat and dates to soften them and then put them in the mouth of Ali to eat; and so did my father, Ali Ibn al-Husayn, with me. He used to cut a piece of hot meat from the thigh of the cooked meat, blow onto it to cool it, and then put it into my mouth to eat. Now, if you can imagine his mercifulness toward me in not letting me eat hot food, then will he not be merciful to me in preventing the Fire from touching me! If my brother was the successor of the Prophet of God for the community as people say, and as my father informed me, in this way he will save me from the Fire.

Also, he has said that some of the companions of Abu Jaʿfar Muḥammad Ibn Ali al-Bāqir have narrated that when some people asked the Imam about this statement of Almighty God:

إِلَّا مَنْ أَرْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَكَانَهُ وَنَسَلْتُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ وَصَدَا

The Imam answered:

God, the Exalted, appoints angels for His messengers, to observe them and count their deeds and then report to God about their mission. He assigned the greatest angel to the Prophet from the time of his weaning, to instruct and teach him the good and to keep him away from the bad things.

He was the very angel who stated to Muhammad when he was still in his early youth: "Peace be upon you, O Muhammad, O the Messenger of God!" The Prophet was too young to make out where the voice was coming from, so he thought it came from the pebbles around, but when he looked at the pebbles he did not see anything in particular happening.¹³²

In any case, right from the time when Ali was born and Abu Tālib and Fātimah (the daughter of Asad trusted him to the Prophet), Ali recited the verse

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

indeed the believers have succeeded, and the Prophet took the responsibility of looking after him. He became responsible not only for feeding and looking after him, but for training and teaching him all visible and invisible divine knowledge throughout time. It is obvious that instructing someone with such knowledge does not mean teaching it to him word by word; it must be taught inwardly, engraving it on the mind of the listener so that he intuits the essence of it. Such knowledge is achieved by the purest heart, and the achiever receives such a high rank that he observes whatever exists as well as that which is not yet created and is unseen.

Certainly the position of the Imam is beyond this. He achieves the position of absolute detachment. The screens that hide the spiritual are removed from his sight, and he even passes beyond the veils of the imagination and the ordinary senses. He reaches such a state that his spiritual journeys come to an end. However, he still possesses those senses, and they are with him wherever he might be.

Because of the training he received at the side of the blissful being of the Prophet, Imam Ali was worried about the affairs of society. He gave the highest ranks and positions to many of his sincere companions and followers. One of them was the same Juwayrat Ibn Mus-hir 'Abdī whom we mentioned earlier. The others were Rushayd Hajarī, Maytham Tammār, and Ḥabīb Ibn Mazāhir Asadī. All of them

possessed the highest knowledge of suffering, affliction, great disastrous events, and seditions.

The term *manāyā*, the plural of *manīyyah*, means "man's detachment from this world"; and whoever has this knowledge becomes aware of the future deaths of some people.

The term *balāyā*, the plural of *baliyya*, means "disaster and trial"; he who has this knowledge is aware of all events and afflictions, such as earthquakes, storms, and different types of illnesses that will occur in people.

The plural form *a'mār* is *amr*, which means life, and it has the same meaning as *'umr* and *'umur*. Whoever is aware of this knowledge understands well the secrets of the lives of some other people.

Malāḥim is the plural form of *malḥam*. It means harsh killing in battle. Anyone who has this knowledge becomes aware of everything that will happen in life, such as war, killing, attaining victory, disasters, being saved from disasters, sedition, the conditions at the time of the seditions, and many other events.

Fitān is plural of *fitnah*. It means trial, going astray, blasphemy, hardship, madness, illnesses, torture, loss of property, knowing the disagreements among the people, and so on. He who has this knowledge may be aware of the events mentioned above.

It is possible that someone may have all this knowledge in him and know everything about it, and someone else know some of it but not all; it may be that someone has all this knowledge all throughout his life, but he is aware of it only from time to time.

Imam Ali had all the kinds knowledge mentioned above, and he continuously knew that knowledge, as is known through the events mentioned in history books, biographies, and hadith.

Shaykh Mufid has mentioned in *Irshād* that Imam Ali was quite aware of what Walid Ibn Hārith and some others from the Sunni group, such as Busr Ibn 'Arṭāt in Yemen, did. When the Imam heard what had happened, he said:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي بَسْرًا قَدْ بَايَعَ دِينَهُ بِالْأَلْبِيَا، فَسَلِّمْهُ عَظْمَهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ لِمِنْ دِينِهِ مَا يَنْتَوِجُ بِهِ عَلَيْكَ رَحْمَتَكَ

"O God! Indeed Busr has exchanged his faith for this trifling world, so take back his intelligence from him, and let him not have even a tiny bit of faith in him; that is, take away whatever he has in this world and in the world to come."

Busr remained alive for a long time, and in the end he became insane. He would constantly demand a sword. They made a wooden sword and handed it to him; he would strike things around him so much with that sword that he would become unconscious and fall

flat on the ground! And when he came to, he would call out: "My sword, my sword!" When they gave him back the wooden sword, he would go on doing the same thing. This was his condition until he died.¹³³

It is very well known that the Imam used to say:

إِنكُمْ سَمِعْتُمْ مِنْ بَنِي سَيِّ، فَتَبُؤُنِي فَإِنْ عَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْبَرَاءَةُ مِنِّي فَلَا تَبْرُؤُوا
مِنِّي، فَإِنِّي وَلَدْتُ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ. فَتَعْرِضْ عَلَيْهِ الْبَرَاءَةَ مِنِّي فَلْيَنْدُ عُنُقَهُ، فَتَبْرَأُوا مِنِّي فَلَا دُنْيَا
لَهُ وَلَا آخِرَةٌ¹³⁴

Certainly after my demise they will make you curse me, and in that case you will curse me. However, if they try to encourage you to disavow me and declare your hatred for me, do not do so, because I have been born in this religion of Islam. If they insist that anyone disavow me and declare his hatred for me, he must refuse to do what they ask for. Finally, if anyone pronounces his hatred and disavows me, he will not see happiness in this world or the next!

On the basis of this principle, Sufyān Ibn 'Uyaynah has narrated from Yamānī that Imam Ali told Ḥujr Badrī:

يَا حُجْرُ، كَيْفَ بَلَكَ إِذَا أَوْقَعْتَ عَلَى مَنبَرٍ صَنَاءً وَأَمَرْتَ بِسَبِّهِ وَالْبَرَاءَةِ مِنِّي

"O Ḥujr, how will you feel when they make you stand on the pulpit in Ṣan'ā' and then command you to abuse and show your hatred for me?"

Ḥujr answered: "In this case, I will take refuge in God!"

Imam Ali said:

وَاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ كَلَنُ، فَإِذَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ فَسَبِّحْ وَلَا تَكْفُرْ أَمِنِّي، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ تَبْرَأَ مِنِّي فِي الدُّنْيَا بَرِئْتُ مِنْهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ

"By God, this will occur, so when you come to it, do curse me, but never disavow me and show your hatred for me, because anyone who disavows and shows his hatred for me, I will hate him in the Hereafter!"

Ṭāwūs Yamānī says:

Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf Thaqaḥī captured Ḥujr Badrī and commanded him to abuse Ali. Ḥujr climbed the pulpit and said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ أَمِيرَكُمْ هَذَا أَمَرَنِي أَنْ أَلْعَنَ عَلَيْكَ، أَلَا قُلْتُمْ وَلَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ¹³⁵

"O people, be aware! This Amir of yours commanded me to curse Ali. Beware, for God may curse the one who curses him."¹³⁶

Also, Walīd Ibn Hārith has narrated from the Imam, saying:

أَمَّا النَّاسُ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى الْحَقِّ فَكُفَيْتُمْ عَنِّي، وَضَعْتُمْ بِالذُّرَّةِ دَاغِيَتُمْوَنِي. أَمَّا أَنَا فَسَلِّمُكُمْ مِنْ تَعْدِي وَلَا تَزِدُونِي مِنْكُمْ بِهَذَا حَتَّى يَحْذُبُوكُمُ الشَّيَاطِطُ وَالْحَدِيدُ. إِنَّهُ مَنْ عَذَّبَ النَّاسَ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَذَّبَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَآيَةُ ذَلِكَ أَنْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ صَاحِبَ الْقِمَرِ حَتَّى يَمِيلَ بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ فَيَأْخُذُ الْأَعْمَالُ وَالْعُمَّالَ الْأَعْمَالُ، وَجُلُّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: يُوسُفُ بْنُ عُمرَ.¹³⁷

O people! I invited you to the truth but you turned your back on me. I tried to attract your attention to me by whipping my hand, but you made me tired. Now beware, after me your rulers will take control over you in their hands. They will not content themselves with just whipping you, but they will chain you and kill you with swords and daggers. In fact God will torture those who afflict the people in this world. Remember that the sign of the truth of what I tell you is that the first man who comes to govern you will be a Yemeni. He will mingle with you, and then will begin to arrest the workers; then he will capture your chiefs and commanders and even ordinary people. He will be someone called Yūsuf Ibn Omar.

Shaykh Mufid says: "All these predictions of the Imam came true."

In a hadith that has been narrated from Imam Ṣādiq, a man who avowed he was a Shi'a kept praising the Imam. The Imam said: "I am more humble than you describe, and am much higher than you think I am."¹³⁸

Nāshī says:

لَهُ فِي كُلِّ وَجْهِ سَمَةٌ تُنَبِّئُ عَنِ الصُّلْبِ كُنْتُ الرَّجْسَ بِالتَّيِّبِ وَتَطْلَى الْبُيُوتُ بِالرُّشْدِ¹³⁹

"For everything, there is a sign that indicates the origin and principle of that thing. Evil is fed by straying, and goodness by the right path."

It has been given in the book *Ma'rifat wa Tārīkh* from Nasawī that Ghāfiqī said:

I heard Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib saying:

يَأْمَلُ الْإِرَاقِيَّ يَبْقَى مِنْكُمْ سَبْعَةٌ يَهْرَاءُ، تَقْلَهُمْ كَقَتْلِ أَصْحَابِ الْأَخْذُودِ¹⁴⁰

"O people of Iraq, soon seven of you will be killed in 'Adhrā',¹⁴¹ and their likeness is as the companions of Okhdūd." Sometime later, Hujr Ibn 'Adī and his companions were killed at 'Adhrā'.¹⁴²

Hujr Ibn 'Adī Kindī from Kūfa was among the great companions of Imam Ali. He was very well known among the Arabs for his piety and prayers. It is said that he used to pray a thousand times every day. The narrators have described his condition in detail. Among the narrators is Ibn Athīr, who has written his biography in *Usd al-Ghābah*. Now we will explain briefly about him from the *Istī'ab* of 'Abd al-Birr Andalusi:

Hujr Ibn 'Adī Kindī was one of the great companions of the Prophet, though he was younger than the others. He was the most pious man and the chief of the Kindī army at the battles of Siffin and Nahrawān. He carried the banner of the army of Imam Ali. As Mu'āwiyah trusted the government of Iraq to Ziyād Ibn Abih, and Ziyād demonstrated his hateful nature in governing there, Hujr Ibn 'Adī took the authority away from him, though Mu'āwiyah did not dismiss him. It was at the time when some of the companions of Imam Ali were following Hujr. One day, when Ziyād was late to join the congregational prayer, Hujr and his followers threw pebbles at him.

Ziyād wrote about the incident to Mu'āwiyah, who commanded Hujr to be sent to him. Ziyād sent Hujr together with 12 other chained men to Mu'āwiyah by Wā'il Ibn Hujr Ḥaḍramī. Mu'āwiyah had six of them beheaded at once and kept the other six alive, and Hujr Ibn 'Adī was one of them who was killed.

When the news of the chained Hujr and his friends reached 'Āyisha in Medina, she sent 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Hārith Ibn Hishām to Mu'āwiyah in Syria, telling him to be careful of Hujr and his friends. But when 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Hārith reached Syria, he found that Hujr and his five friends had been killed.

'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Hārith asked Mu'āwiyah: "Where have you hidden Hujr and his friends? Why did you not put them in prison to die of the plague?" Mu'āwiyah said: "It was because I could not find a wise man like you in my army to give me advice."

'Abd al-Rahmān said: "The Arabs will not take you as a man of forbearance. You killed a group of Muslims who were brought to you in chains." Mu'āwiyah said: "What could I do? It was Ziyād who wrote me

a letter saying that they would soon bring chaos to his army, so they had to be killed at once."

After this event Mu'āwīyah went to Medina, and immediately went to see 'Āyisha. The first thing 'Āyisha asked him was about Ḥujr and his being killed. Then, after a long discussion between them, 'Āyisha said: "Now leave the case of Ḥujr to me until we meet each other in the presence of the Creator!"

The place where Ḥujr Ibn 'Adī and his friends were killed is known as the region of Marj 'Adhrā'. When they wanted to behead him, he said two units of prayer and then said to those friends and acquaintances of his standing around: "After my death do not take the chains from around my legs, and do not wash the bleeding spots on my body, because I am going to meet my Creator the way that I am."

It is narrated from Mubārak Ibn Faḍālah: "I heard it from Hasan Baṣrī that when he heard of the case of Mu'āwīyah and how he killed Ḥujr Ibn 'Adī and his friends, he said: "Woe upon him who killed Ḥujr and his companions!"

Ahmad says: "I told Yaḥyā Ibn Sulaymān: 'Have you heard that Ḥujr was a man whose prayer was granted?' He answered: 'Yes, he was among the greatest companions of the Prophet of God.'"

Now we will narrate from Abu Sa'īd Maqbūrī, who said:

When Mu'āwīyah went on a *hajj* pilgrimage, he went to Medina and there he asked for permission to visit 'Āyisha. When Mu'āwīyah sat down, 'Āyisha asked him: "O Mu'āwīyah, do you feel secure in my presence? I mean, are you sure that I have not hidden someone here to murder you, after you killed my brother Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr?" Mu'āwīyah answered: "I have walked into a secure house!" 'Āyisha asked: "Were you not afraid of God when killing Ḥujr and his companions?" Mu'āwīyah replied: "One who bears witness against them has killed them!"

It is narrated from Masrūq Ibn Ajda' that he heard 'Āyisha saying:

أَنَا وَاللَّهِ لَوْ عَلِمْتُ مَعَاوِيَةَ أَنْ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ الْكُوفَةِ مَنَعَةٌ مَا جِئْتُ أَعْلَى أَنْ يَأْخُذَ حُجْرًا وَأَصْحَابَهُ مِنْ بَنِيهِمْ
حَتَّى يَقْتُلُوهُمْ بِالشَّامِ، وَلَكِنْ إِنِّي أَكَلْتُ الْإِكْبَادِ عَلِيمٌ أَنَّهُ قَدْ ذَهَبَ النَّاسُ، وَأَمَّا اللَّهُ إِنْ كَانُوا
لِلْجَنَّةِ الْمَرْبِ عِزًّا وَمَنَعَةً وَرِضًا. وَلِلَّهِ دُرِّيذٌ حَيْثُ يَقُولُ

ذَهَبَ الَّذِينَ يَمَاشُ فِي أَكْتَافِهِمْ وَبَقِيَ فِي خَلْفٍ كَجِلْدِ الْأَجْرِبِ 1
لَا يَنْفَعُونَ وَلَا يُرْجَى خَيْرٌهُمْ وَبَابٌ كَالْبُلْبُلِ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَنْفَسْ 2

Beware! By God, if Mu'āwiyah had known that he (Hujr) had honor and power among the people of Kūfa, he would not have dared to arrest Hujr and his companions among the people of Kūfa and then killed them in Syria. However, this tyrannical son of a raw-liver-eating woman [Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyān, and Mu'āwiyah's mother, who in the battle of Uḥud chewed the raw liver of Ḥamzah, the master of the martyrs] was well aware that the greatest men have passed away [and there remain no such brave people]. Beware! By God, they were the source of honor for the chiefs of the Arabs. And may God bestow His peace and blessing upon the past poet who said:

1. Passed away are those under whose protection I could live, and now I remain among the living who are affected with fatal diseases [that is, those who passed away were like sound animals and I could benefit by living with them; however, now there remain some ill and skinny animals who are no benefit to me].
2. These left behind are of no use, and it is hopeless to expect any benefit from them; and if anyone speaks the truth among them, he will be condemned, although he has not committed any evil.

When the news of Hujr Ibn 'Adī's death reached Rabī' Ibn Ziyād Hārithī, who was from the tribe of Banī Hārith and was a learned man and an agent for Mu'āwiyah in Khurasan, he prayed to God, saying: "O my God the Creator! If there is any good of Rabī' in Your presence, take his soul away as soon as possible!" It is very strange, but Rabī' immediately died where he was sitting!

The death of Hujr Ibn 'Adī happened in the year 55 AH.¹⁴³

There are numerous hadiths in which Imam Ali has mentioned the seditions after his demise. Once in Kūfa, when he witnessed the corruption of the people, he got up to make a speech and called the people around to come together. Then he said:

مَعَ أَيِّ إِمَامٍ يَتَّبِعُونَ؟ وَأَيُّ دَارٍ يَتَدَارَكُ تَعْمَقُونَ؟ أَمَّا أَنْتُمْ سَتَقُونُ بَعْدِي ذُلًّا غَامِلًا وَسَبًّا
فَاطِمًا وَمَأْتَرَةً قَبِيحَةً تَحْتُمِلُهَا الطَّالُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ سُنَّةَ 144

"After me, behind whom you will fight? Apart from your house, whose house will you defend and save? Beware! After me, you are going to face disaster; they are going to kill you with swords! They will act against your customs and belief for their own benefit!"

Further, he told to the people of Kūfa:

أَمَّا أَنَا سَيَطْمُرُ عَلَيْكُمْ رَجُلٌ رَحِيبُ الْهَوَى، مُنْدَجِقُ الْبَطْنِ، يَأْكُلُ مَا يَمِيزُ، وَتَكْلَبُ مَا لَا يَمِيزُ
فَاكْلُوهُ، وَلَنْ تَقْتُلُوهُ، أَلَا وَأَنَا سَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِسَبِّهِ وَالْبَرَاءَةِ مِنِّي أَمَّا السَّبُّ فَتَسُونِي، وَأَمَّا الْبَرَاءَةُ عَنِّْي فَلَا
تُكْرِمُونِي، لَبِئْسَ وَبُذْتُ عَلَى الْبَطْنَةِ، وَسَبَّكَ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَالْهِجْرَةِ بَعْنِي مَطْلُوبَةً¹⁴⁵

Beware! Before long a man with a large throat and swollen stomach will govern you, who will eat as much as he can and demand more than he can find to eat! So kill him if you can, but you will not be able to kill him. Beware! He will command you to curse me and show your hatred for me. But with regards to the cursing, do curse me, but do not show your hatred for me, because I have been born with a pure nature, and I have priority in Islam and immigration for the sake of Islam.

The Imam was referring to Mu'āwiyah.

Mahmoud Zamakhsharī has given the statement of Imam Ali in the book *Fā'iq* as follows:

إِنَّ مِنْ وَارِدِ كُرَامُورٍ أَمْتًا حَلَّةً زِدًا وَتَلَاءً مُطْلًا¹⁴⁶

"Certainly against you there will arise severe disasters and afflictions."

Ibn Athir Jazari says:

The word

زِدَح

means "heavy," which is why the Imam has used this term. It has been narrated: "After you there will be serious seditions."¹⁴⁷

Further, Ibn Athir says: "The term *mahl* in Arabic means to defend or to dispute in a severe manner; Ali's hadith is of this category, where he says: 'Certainly against you there will arise severe disasters and afflictions.' That means lengthy seditions."¹⁴⁸

Ibn Athir Jazari also says: "The meaning of *balh* in Arabic is hardship and severities that afflict a man so greatly that he cannot move about. Now the hadith of Ali is of this category: 'Certainly against you there will arise severe disasters and afflictions.' This means so great an affliction that it drains a man of his energy."¹⁴⁹

He also says: "The term *kallh* in Ali's hadith means that it is such an affliction that it makes a man angry and he always feels dull! And

the term *kulūh* is the plural of *kalh*. It is used in phrases such as 'One looks depressed; sorrows and agonies have affected him.'¹⁵⁰

In any case, all these statements when viewed together paint a picture of a difficult period, when society will be corrupted; it means the teachings of religion and morality will be in danger, and then naturally crime and disorder will occur. A clear picture of the time of Banī Umayyad, Mu'āwīyah, Yazīd, Marwān and Banī Marwān, and their corrupt governments is presented.

It is recorded in another hadith that the Imam informed the people about the government of Banī Umayyad and Banī 'Abbās in the future, and he mentioned some distinguished attributes of Banī 'Abbās, such as the kindness of their first caliph; the tyrannical murdering of the second one, Abdullah; the great sovereignty of Manṣūr; and the cleverness of the fifth and seventh. Then would come Ma'mūn, who would be the enemy of the Household, and then Muta-wakkil, who would be killed by his son. The fifteenth of them, Mu'tamid, would suffer excessive hardship, because it would be he who would face the battle with the *Ṣāhib Zanj*. And he spoke of the goodness of the sixteenth, who would be with the Mu'ta'id, and also the death of the eighteenth at the hands of Muqtadir and his three sons, Raḡī, Muttaqī, and Muṭī', who would attack the government.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb, in *al-Manāqib*, says:

Among the sermons of Imam Ali is the following:

وَبَلَّغُوا الْأُمَّةَ مِنْ رِجَالِهِمْ، الشَّجَرَةَ الْمَلْعُونَةَ الَّتِي ذَكَرَهَا رَبُّكُمْ تَعَالَى أُولَئِكَ خَضِرَاءُ وَآخِرُهُمْ هَزْمَاءُ.
ثُمَّ تَلَى يَدْرُهُمْ أَمْرًا مَعْدُودًا رِجَالًا: أُولَئِكَ أَرَأَيْتُمْ وَثَائِبَهُمْ أَتَصَكُّهُمْ وَخَامِسُهُمْ كَبَشُهُمْ، وَسَابِعُهُمْ
أَعْلَمُهُمْ، وَعَاشِرُهُمْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ يَقْتُلُهُ أَهْلُهُمْ بِهِ، وَخَامِسُ عَشْرِهِمْ كَبِيرُ النَّبَاءِ قَلِيلُ الْفِتَاءِ سَادِسُ
عَشْرِهِمْ أَقْصَاهُمْ لِلنِّعَمِ وَأَوْصَلُهُمْ لِلرَّحِمِ، كَأَنِّي أَرَى ثَامِنَ عَشْرِهِمْ تُفَصِّصُ رِجْلَاهُ فِي دَمِهِ يَنْدَانُ بِأَخِي
جَنْدُنَ بِكَطْمِهِ، مِنْ وَلَدِ ثَلَاثِ رِجَالٍ سَيَرَتْهُمْ سِيرَةُ الضَّلَالِ وَالْقَانِي وَالْعِشْرُونَ مِنْهُمْ الشَّيْخُ
الْهَرِمُ تَطُولُ أَعْوَامُهُ وَتَوَافِي الرِّجِيَّةُ أَيْامُهُ، السَّادِسُ وَالْعِشْرُونَ مِنْهُمْ يَشْرُدُ الْمَلِكُ مِنْهُ شُرُودُ
الْقَتَنِ، وَتَسْطُلُ الْهَرَمَةُ التَّقْنِي، لَكَأَنِّي أَرَاهُ عَلَى جِسْرِ الزُّوْدَاءِ قَبِيلًا ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتَ بِذَلِكَ وَأَنَّ
اللَّهُ لَا يَسِرُّ بِظُلَامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ¹⁵¹

At the beginning of the sermon, the Imam points to the rulers of Banī Umayyad, who, in the Holy Qur'an, are called *shajarat mal'unah* (the cursed tree). The sovereignty of Mu'āwīyah was the first among them,

and it was fresh, most powerful and luxurious; it was called *shajara khadrā'* (green tree), and at the time of Marwān Ḥimār, the last one of their sovereignty, it became weaker, broken, and nearer to dying, so it was called "a ruined and fallen tree."

As we have already mentioned, he goes on narrating about the attributes of the rulers of Banī 'Abbās up to Muqtadir, who was the eighteenth of them. Now, Mūnis Khādim, one of his soldiers, escaped from the army and went to Moṣul, where he formed his own army and then returned to Baghdad and fought with the king, Muqtadir. He defeated his army, and Muqtadir was killed in the battle. After his death, three of his sons took the sovereignty. That is why Imam Ali described him in this way: "After that his army grabs him and presses his throat, as if it was in front of my eyes and I clearly see that he rolls in his blood and he pounds the ground with his feet. And then, three of his sons who were cruel, gone astray, as their father, take the authority in their hands."

The twenty-sixth of them was a frail old man whose sovereignty lasted for a long period of time, and the community enjoyed life during his government.

Explaining this sermon, Majlisī says:

The 22nd caliph was Banī 'Abbās al-Muktafi Billāh Abdullah, who became the caliph at the age of 41. It was in 333-34 AH that Ahmad Ibn Bābwayh attacked Baghdad, captured al-Muktafi Billāh, and pulled his eyes out of their sockets. Al-Muktafi died in 338 AH. It is narrated that his caliphate lasted for only 16 months. In any case, the ordinal "22nd" might be a mistake of some historians, because the correct one is 25th or 26th. In the first case, it was the caliph al-Qādir Billāh Ahmad Ibn Ishāq who lived for 86 years, and his caliphate was for 41 years. In the second case, it is the caliph al-Qā'im Biamrillāh who lived for 76 years, and his government lasted for 44 years.

Here, after explaining different cases, Majlisī says:

Their claim, "26th caliph," might refer to their own caliph, al-Mu'taṣim Billāh, who was killed and whose state and sovereignty were taken away. He was gradually ruined, became weaker and weaker, and finally ran away in total abjection. Al-Mu'taṣim Billāh was the last one among the caliphs of Banī 'Abbās. Imam Ali mentioned him as the 26th caliph, though he was the 27th of them, because he was the 26th of the great and famous ones. It was because many of them were not independent in their caliphate, and they were defeated by the Turks.¹⁵²

The following is a continuation of the same sermon:

سَيُغْرِبُ الْإِرَاقُ بَيْنَ رَجُلَيْنِ، يَكْثُرُ بَيْنَهُمَا الْجَمْرُوعُ وَالْقَتِيلُ—يَغْنَى طُرْلُوكُ وَالذَّقِيلُ—لَكَأَنِّي أَنَا أَمِدُهُ
وَمَاءَ ذَوَاتِ الْقُرُوجِ بِمَاءِ أَحْطَابِ الشُّرُوجِ. قِيلَ لِأَهْلِ الزُّوْدَاءِ مِنْ بَنِي قَطُورَةَ¹⁵³

"Iraq will become worse very soon due to the battle between two hostile men, and many people will be killed; these two are Ṭurlik and Dawaylam—I see that the blood of men and women will run on the ground! Woe upon the people of Baghdad from Banī Qanṭūrah!"

Majlisī in his explanation of this part has narrated from Jazari that Ḥudhayfah has narrated:

بِشَيْءٍ بُو قَطُورَاءُ أَنْ يَمْرُجُوا أَهْلَ الْإِرَاقِ مِنْ عِرَاقِهِمْ وَقَعَرَى: أَهْلُ الْهَضْرَةِ مِنْهَا—كَأَنِّي بِهِمْ خُنُسُ
الْأَنْوَبِ، خُزْرُ السُّيُونِ، عِرَاضُ الْوُجُودِ¹⁵⁴

"It is quite possible that the sons of Qanṭūrah will send the people of Iraq away from their home-towns. Further, it is given in the hadith that they will also send the people of Basra away from their towns. It is as if I see them now: they are men with big noses flattened on their faces, with tiny eyes deep in their sockets. On the whole, their faces are wide and gigantic."¹⁵⁵

It is also narrated: "Qanṭūrah was a slave-girl of Abraham, and she delivered a son. The Turks and the Chinese are his progeny." There is a similar hadith from 'Amr al-Āṣ saying: "Banī Qanṭūrah will send you away from your home-town, Basra." And so it is given in the hadith of Abu Bakr: "When the Last Day approaches, Banī Qanṭūrah will be shown [to others]."¹⁵⁶

It is given in this sermon of Imam Ali:

لَكَأَنِّي أَرَى مَنبَتَ الشَّجْرِ عَلَى ظَاهِرِ أَهْلِ الْهَيْبَةِ قَدْ وَفَّتْ بِهِ وَفُتَّانٌ يَحْتَضِرُ فِيهَا الْقَرِيقَانِ—يَغْنَى
وَقُصَّةُ الْمُوَجِّلِ—حَتَّى تُغْنَى بِلَابِ الْأَذَانِ. قِيلَ لِلطَّلَبِ مِنْ مَلَائِكَةِ الْأَفْرَاكِ¹⁵⁷. وَقِيلَ لِلْقُرَبِ مِنْ
مُحَاكِلَةِ الْأَثَرَاكِ. قِيلَ لِأَمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ إِذَا زُرْتُمْ خَمِلَ أَهْلُهَا الْبُلْدَانُ، وَغَمَرُوا قَطُورَةَ نَهْرِ جَبْجَبَانَ، وَفَرَّوْا
نَاءَ دِجْلَةَ، وَمَوَابِقَ صَدْرِ الْهَضْرَةِ وَالْإِمْلَةِ. وَإِمَامُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بِلَدِّكُمْ حَتَّى كَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَى جُلَيْعِهَا
كَجُوجٍ سَفِينَةٍ أَوْ كَأَمَّةٍ جَائِعَةٍ¹⁵⁸

As if I see it now, two kinds of sweet-smelling grass have grown where the Ahl Ḥidḍa are living. There will occur two different events and both sides will face great losses. [He meant the event of Moṣul. That place is now called Bāh al-Adhān.] Woe upon the muddy land that horses trampled when marching on it! Woe upon the Arabs who live side by side with the Turks! Woe upon the people of Muhammad who do not allow the citizens to live in their land. It is when the Banī Qanṭūrah are crossing

the River of Jayhūn. They cross it until they reach the River of Dajlah and drink water, and from there they decide to go to Basra and Aylah. I swear by God that this town of yours—Basra—will become known to everyone. It is as if I see that its great mosque stands in the middle, similar to a huge ship, or like an ostrich resting on the ground.

It is given in a hadith in *Bihār al-Anwār*:

وَأَمَّا اللَّهُ فَيَغْرِقُ بَلَدَكُمْ.

"And by God, this town of yours, Basra, will sink into the earth, and I see what will happen to your great mosque!"¹⁵⁹

It is said in *al-Manāqib* that Qatādah has narrated Saʿīd Ibn Muṣayyib as saying that when Imam Ali was asked about this statement of God:

إِنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا نَحْنُ مُهْلِكُوهَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُوهَا

...and there is no town but We shall destroy [its people] before the Day of Resurrection, or We shall chastise it with a severe chastisement (17: 58), he answered:

Samarqand, Jāh, Khārazm, Isfahan, and Kūfa will be destroyed by the Turks. And Hamedan, Ray, Daylamān, Ṭabariyyah, Medina, and Fars will encounter famine. And Mecca will be captured by the Abyssinians; Basra and Balkh will sink. Sind will be attacked by the Indians and India by the Tibetans and Tibet by the Chinese, and some towns such as Badhashjān, Ṣāghānī, Kirmān, and some parts of Syria will be attacked by the hoofs of horses and their killing of the people; locusts will rain upon Yemen, and the Sultan's attack; Sijistān and some parts of Syria will be destroyed by the attack of the negroes; Shumān by the serious illness of plague; the town of Marv by strong winds, Herat by the attack of snakes, and Nishapūr by the loss of integrity among the people; Adharbyjān will be destroyed by the hoofs of horses and thunderclaps; Bukhara by the famine. And finally the towns of Ḥilm and Baghdad will be totally destroyed.¹⁶⁰

There are also some sayings from Imam Ali about unseen issues, *mughibāt* [concealed matters], and *malāḥim* [intuitions] that are mentioned in the sermon of *Luʾluʾiyyah*, which is one of the most important sermons of the Imam. It is narrated by Shaykh Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Khazzāz Rāzī Qumī in the book *Kifāyat al-Athar fi al-Nuṣūṣ al-Aʿimmat al-Ithnā ʿAshar*,¹⁶¹ with his chains from Ali Ibn Hassan Ibn Mindah, from Muhammad Ibn Husayn Maʿrūf Kūfi, known as Abu al-Ḥakam, from Ismāʿīl Ibn Mūsā Ibrahim, from Sulaymān

Ibn Ḥabīb, from Sharīk, from Ḥakīm Ibn Jubayr, from Ibrahim Nakhaṣī, from ʿAlqamat Ibn Qays, who has narrated:

Imam Ali preached the sermon of *Lu'lu'iyyah* on the pulpit of Kūfa, and at the end of the sermon, he said:

الْأَوَّلَى طَاعِينَ عَنْ قَرِيبٍ وَمُنْطَلِقِينَ إِلَى الْمَسِيبِ، فَارْتَقِبُوا الْفِتْنَةَ الْآخِرَةَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةَ
الْكُفْرِيَّةَ، وَإِمَامَةَ مَا أَحْيَاهُ اللَّهُ، وَإِخَاءَ مَا أَمَاتَهُ وَأَخْلَصُوا صَوَابَهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ
عَلَى مِثْلِ جَبْرِ الْقَضَاءِ، وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا أَذْكُرُهُ أَكْبَرَ لَوْ كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
ثُمَّ قَالَ: وَلَتُنْقِىَ مَدِينَتُهُ بِقَالَ لَهَا الزَّوْءَاءُ بَيْنَ دَجَلَةٍ وَذُجَيْلٍ وَالْقُرَابِ وَالْمُرُورِ بِأَيُّهَا مَدِينَتُهُ
بِالسَّحَابِ وَالْأَجْرِ، مُرَحِّقَةً بِالذُّبَابِ وَالْقِطَّةِ وَاللَّادُودِ وَالْمُسْتَقَى وَالْمُرُورِ بِالْغَنَامِ وَالْأَوَابِ
السَّاجِ وَالْأَبْيُوسِ وَالْحَنِيمِ وَالْقَهَابِ وَالشَّارَاتِ وَقَدْ غُلِيَتْ بِالسَّاجِ وَالْقَرْعِ وَالْمُسْتَقَى وَالْقَهَابِ
وَبُنِيَتْ بِالْقُصُورِ، وَقَالَ عَلَيْهَا مَلِكٌ بَنَى شَيْعَبَانِ: أَرْبَعَةٌ وَعِشْرُونَ مَلِكًا عَلَى عِدْرِي
الْمَلِكِ هَكَذَا، فِيهِمُ الشُّفَاخُ وَالْغِلَاصُ وَالْجُوعُ وَالْمَحْنُوعُ وَالْظَفَرُ وَالْمُوثُ وَالْظَلَاوُ
الْكَبَشُ وَالْتَهْمُورُ وَالشَّارُ وَالْمُطْطَلِمُ وَالْمُسْتَصْمَبُ وَالْعَلَامُ وَالزُّهْبَانِيُّ وَالْخَلِجُ وَالسَّيَارُ
الْمُرْتُ وَالْكَيْدُ وَالْأَكْسَبُ وَالْمُرْتُ وَالْأَكْسَبُ وَالْأَكْسَبُ وَالْأَكْسَبُ وَالْأَكْسَبُ وَالْأَكْسَبُ
وَتَعْمَلُ الْقُبَّةُ الْقُبَاءَ ذَاتَ الْقَلَادَةِ الْحُمْرَاءِ، وَفِي عَقِبِهَا كَأَنَّهَا تُسْقَرُ عَنْ وَجْهِ بَيْنَ الْأَقْلِيمِ
كَأَقْمَرِ الْمُنَى وَبَيْنَ الْكَوَاكِبِ الثُّنْيَةِ الْأَوَّلَى وَالْمُخْرُجَةِ عِلَالَاتٍ عَشْرَةَ: أَوَّلُهَا طُلُوعُ
الْكَوَاكِبِ ذِي الذَّنَبِ وَيَقَارِبُ مِنَ الْحَادِي، وَيَقَعُ فِيهِ هَجْرٌ وَمَرْجٌ وَشَقَبٌ، وَتَلَكُ
عِلَالَاتُ الْخُطْبِ، وَمِنَ السَّلَامَةِ إِلَى السَّلَامَةِ عَجَبٌ، فَإِذَا انْقَضَتِ السَّلَامَاتُ الْعَشْرَةُ إِذَا ذَاكَ
يُظْهَرُ بِأَقْمَرِ الْأَزْهَرِ، وَتَمَّتِ الْإِخْلَاصُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى التَّوْحِيدِ.

Beware! I have packed my suitcase for my journey, and I am leaving this world very soon. Therefore, be alert to the sedition of Umayyah and the sovereignty of Kasrawiyyah. Expect the occasion that God has willed, ruin and banishment, to occur. Make your cells and praying places your homes, and then try to secure your religion as one who protects a blazing fire to keep him warm—you too try hard to save your religion. Remember God more, and mention His name always, because remembrance of God is above whatever you think of.

Then he said:

There will be built a town between the river Euphrates and the town of Dujayl called Zawra' (Baghdad). If you could see that town you would notice that its walls are decorated with plaster, bricks, gold, silver, and cobalt and then covered with *rukham*¹⁶³ marble. Its doors are made of elephant tusks resembling ebony. There are tabernacles, domes, and different tents and curtains therein. In that town, you can see tall teak and juniper trees rising high around the magnificent palaces. The town will constantly be governed by the sultans of Banī Shayṣabān. They will be 24 men for the 26 years of the kingdom. They will include Saffāh, Maṣṣūr, Maḥdī, Hādī, Rashīd, Muhammad Ibn Zubaydah Amin, Ma'mūn, Mu'taṣim, Wāthiq, Muntaṣir, Musta'in, Mu'tazz, Mu'tamid, Mu'tazid, Muttaqī, Muqtadir, Qāhir, Rāzī, Muktafī, and Muṭṭī.

They will build an earthly dome on a vast reddish land. Following this government there will appear the rightful government: shining as the moon and illuminating the whole world. Beware! There are 10 signs for the appearance of that rightful and just ruler: the first sign is that a comet will appear next to the star Hādī, at which point there will arise chaos, sedition, battle, and confusion; all these are because of the affluent and luxurious lives people will live. Between one sign and the next many strange events will occur. After these 10 signs take place and pass away, there will be time for us to see the Bright Moon of us; it is then that the sincere word, the Unity of God, will be fulfilled.

Majlisī, in his explanation of this prediction, says: "The word *Shayṣabān* is another name for Satan, as the Banī 'Abbās were the partners of Satan, so they are given this title. The Imam has counted them here as 24 although they were 37; it is because some of them were weak, and the duration of their governments was short."¹⁶⁴

When narrating this hadith up to here, Ali Ibn Muhammad Khazzāz Rāzī says:

In the middle of the sermon of Imam Ali, a man stood up and said: "O Master of the Faithful, you have informed us of the unauthorized caliphate and the leaders of the blasphemy; now let us know about the rightful Imams coming after you!"

The Imam replied:

Yes, this is covenant that the Prophet has made with me; he has said that the imamate and the leadership is going to be for twelve Imams; nine of them are from the loins of Husayn. Concerning this, the Prophet told me:

When they took me high up for the *mi'rāj*, I cast a glance at the surface of the firmament and saw that it was written:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، أَتَيْتُهُ بِطَلِي، وَصَرَّيْتُهِ بِطَلِي

"There is no god but God, Muhammad is God's Messenger, I assist him for [the sake of] Ali, and I helped him for [the sake of] Ali."

He continued: "I witnessed twelve Lights, so I asked God to whom belonged those twelve Lights. I was told: 'O Muhammad, these Lights are the Imams from your progeny.'"

Imam Ali says:

I asked: "O Prophet of God, will you not inform me of their names?"
The Prophet said:

Yes. You are the imam and caliph after me to fulfil my promises, and after you are your two sons, Hasan and Husayn, and after Husayn is his son Ali Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn. After him is his son Muhammad, called Bāqir, and after Muhammad is his son Jaʿfar, who will be called Ṣādiq. After Jaʿfar is his son Mūsā, who is titled Kāzim, and after Mūsā is his son Ali, called Rizā. Then after Ali is his son Muhammad, called Zakī, and after Muhammad is his son Ali, called Naqī. After him is his son Hasan, called Amin, and the Living Imam is his son who is named after me, and he very much looks like me.

يَبْلَأُ مَا قَسَطُوا وَعَدَلَا كَمَا مِلْتُ جَوْرًا وَظُلْمًا.¹⁶⁵

He will bring justice to the land, after it is afflicted with cruel oppression!

Further, Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

Imam Ali has said in the sermon of *Qaṣṣiyyah*:

الْعَجَبُ كُلُّ الْعَجَبِ بَيْنَ جُمَادَى وَرَجَبٍ وَقَوْلُهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: وَأَيُّ عَجَبٍ الْعَجَبُ مِنْ أَمْوَاتٍ يَضْرِبُونَ
هَامَاتِ الْأَحْيَاءِ.¹⁶⁶

"Strange! Yes, the strangest thing is that which will happen between the two months of Jumādī (first and second Jumādī) and Rajab." He has also said: "What is more surprising than that some of those who are alive will beat the dead!"

Imam Ali informed people that some from among his companions would be killed, and among them would be Hujr Ibn 'Adī, Rushayd Hajārī, Kumayl Ibn Ziyād Nakha'ī, Maytham Tammār, Muhammad Ibn Aktam, Khālīd Ibn Mas'ūd, Ḥabīb Ibn Mazāhir, Juwayriya Ibn Mus-hir, 'Amr Ibn Ḥamiq, Qanbar, Mudharra',¹⁶⁷ and a few others along with them.¹⁶⁸

Shaykh Mufid in *Irshād*, says:

And it is exactly the same as what 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Ṣuhayb has narrated from Abu al-'Āliyah, who said:

أَمَّ وَاللَّهِ لَيَقْبَلَنَّ جَيْشٌ عَقَى إِذَا كُنَّ بِالْبَدَاوِ غُيْفَ يَهُمِ

"Yes, by God, an army will come to fight, but when it reaches the middle of the desert, the sandy land will devour them all."

Abu al-'Āliyah says:

I asked Mudharra': "Is this an unseen news that you are giving me?" And he said:

إِخْطَ مَا أَقُولُ لَكَ، وَاللَّهِ لَيَكُونَنَّ مَا أَخْبَرَنِي بِهِ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَلَيُؤْخَذَنَّ
رَجُلٌ فَلَيَقْتُلَنَّ وَيُصَلَّبَنَّ بَيْنَ شُرُفَيْنِ مِنْ شُرُفِ هَذَا الْمَسْجِدِ

"Try to remember what I am telling you now: by God, whatever Imam Ali told me will happen without doubt. By God, a man will be captured and killed; he will be hanged from the two balconies of this mosque."

Abu al-'Āliyah says: "I asked him if he would let me know about the unseen news. Mudharra' said: 'This is such news that a reliable man, Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, has entrusted it to me.'"

Abu al-'Āliyah says:

فَمَا أَتَتْ عَلَيْنَا بَجْمَةٌ حَتَّى إِحْدَى مَرْزُوعٍ فَصَلَّ وَصَلَّبَ بَيْنَ الشُّرُفَيْنِ كُلَّ: وَقَدْ كُنَّ حَدَّثَنِي بِأَلَاةٍ
قَبِيحَةٍ

"Hardly a week had passed, and it was not Friday [the weekend], when they arrested Mudharra' and then killed him. They hanged him between the two balconies of that mosque."

Abu al-'Āliyah says: "Mudharra' also told me another event, but I have forgotten it now."¹⁶⁹

Ibn Shahr Āshūb has explained this hadith in *al-Manāqib*.¹⁷⁰ Majlisī has mentioned it in *Bihār al-Anwār* from *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, from Abu Dāwūd Ṭayālīsī, from Sulaymān Ibn Zariq, from ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Šāhib, from Abu al-‘Āliyah, from Mudharra’. At the end of the hadith, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd says:

I say that Bukhārī and Muslim have erased from both their *Ṣaḥīḥs* the hadith of *khushf bi jaysh* ("the earth has swallowed the army"). It is from Umm Salama, may God be pleased with her, who says:

I heard the Prophet saying:

يُؤَذِّقُ قَوْمٌ بِالْبَيْتِ حَتَّى إِذَا كَلَّوْا بِالْبَيْتِ خُفِيَ بِهِمْ

"A certain tribe set out to get shelter in the House of God; however, in the middle of the desert all of them were plunged into the earth!"

Umm Salama says:

I said: "There might be one among them unwilling to go with them, or they might force him to follow them!" The Prophet stated: "They will plunge." However, he added: "They will unite on the Day of Resurrection," or I think he said: "They will be raised according to their individual decision."

It is narrated that when someone asked Abu Ja‘far Muhammad Ibn Ali whether that land was a common place on the earth, the Imam answered: "No, it is not; this desert belongs to the territory of Medina." Bukhārī has erased a part of the hadith, and Muslim has also done that with some other parts.¹⁷¹

In a sermon, Imam Ali says:

قُتِبَ بِالْأَمْرِ جِئْتُ فَنَلُّوا، وَتَكَلَّفْتُ جِئْتُ نَقَبُوا.¹⁷²

"When the people were weak and unable, I rose to help Islam, and when they were hiding in fright, I presented myself."

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd then adds:

Muhammad Ibn Ali Šarrāf has narrated from Husayn Ibn Sufyān, from his father, and finally from Shamīr Ibn Sudayr Azdī, saying:

Ali asked ‘Amr Ibn Ḥamiq Khuzā‘ī: "O ‘Amr, where are you going to settle?" He answered: "In my tribe." The Imam said: "Do not stay there." ‘Amr said: "So shall I stay with our neighbors, Banī Kinānah?" The Imam answered: "No, not with them." ‘Amr said: "Then shall I settle in the tribe of Thaḳīf?" The Imam said: "In that

case, what are you going to do with Ma'arraḥ and Majarraḥ?" 'Amr asked: "What does Ma'arraḥ and Majarraḥ mean?" The Imam said: "They are the two sets of fire rising behind Kūfa. One of them goes toward the tribe of Tamīm and Bakr Ibn Wā'il, and no one can get rid of it. And the other set of fire comes from the other side of Kūfa and no one can avoid it. It enters the houses and burns one or two rooms in each house."

'Amr said: "So in that case, where shall I stay?" Imam Ali said: "Go to the tribe of Banī 'Amr Ibn 'Āmir, who are from the tribe of Azd, and stay with them."

Those who were standing around and watching said to one another: "We consider Ali to be like a Jewish priest; he is doing what they do!"

Then Imam Ali turned to 'Amr and said:

يَا عَمْرُو إِنَّكَ الْمُقْتُولُ بَعْدِي، وَإِنَّ رَأْسَكَ لَتُقْتَلُ وَهُوَ أَوَّلُ رَأْسٍ يُقْتَلُ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ وَ
الْقَبْلُ لِقَاتِلِكَ، أَمَا إِنَّكَ لَا تَتَزِيلُ بِقَوْمٍ إِلَّا اسْلَمُواكَ بِرِئْتِكَ، إِلَّا هَذَا الْحَيَّ مِنْ بَنِي عَمْرِو
بَنِي عَامِرٍ مِنَ الْأَزْدِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَسْلِمُوكَ وَلَنْ يَخَذُلُوكَ

O 'Amr, certainly you will be killed after me, and they will behead you. That is going to be the first beheading in Islam, and they will carry your head from one place to another. Woe upon your murderer! Let it be known that you will not settle in a certain place before surrendering to them—unless it is the tribe of Banī 'Amr Ibn 'Āmir, who are from Azd; they will not force you to surrender, nor will they humiliate you, and they will not leave you alone.

The narrator of the hadith, Shamīr Ibn Sadīr, says:

By God, it was not too long before the time of Mu'āwiyah's caliphate approached and 'Amr Ibn Ḥamiq was wandering and moving from one tribe to another tribe in fright, until he joined his tribe, Banī Khuzā'a. They surrendered him and he was immediately killed, and then his head was sent to Syria for Mu'āwiyah. It was the first time in Islam they carried a head from town to town.¹⁷³

Shaykh Mufid has mentioned in *Irshād* that the event is the same as what Jarīr has narrated from Mughayrah. He says:

When Ḥajjāj took over the government, he called for Kumayl Ibn Ziyād, but Kumayl ran away from him. From that time on, Ḥajjāj revoked the rewards of Kumayl's relatives. When Kumayl saw that he had cut their share of the rewards he said: "Now I have grown too old; I am at the end of my life, so it is not fair for my relatives to suffer for my sake." Therefore, he went to Ḥajjāj and surrendered himself to him.

When Ḥajjāj saw him, he told him: "I was trying to find a way to arrest you." Kumayl said:

Take charge of your grudge against me; do not humiliate me excessively! By God, I am at the end of my life; there remains no more than a thin layer of my life, and it is going to come to an end very soon:

فَاقْضِ مَا أَنْتَ قَاضٍ، فَإِنَّ الْمَوْعِدَ لِي، وَبَعْدَ الْقَتْلِ الْحِسَابُ، وَلَقَدْ خَبَّرَنِي أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ
السَّلَامُ إِنَّكَ قَاتِلِي.

So treat me according to your judgment, and carry out your decision concerning me. It is because judgment belongs to God, and there will be an accounting after my death. By the way, Imam Ali predicted that you would be my murderer!

Ḥajjāj said: "In that case, an ultimatum concerning you is issued." Kumayl said: "It is Divine Destiny being carried out by your hand!" Ḥajjāj said: "Yes, as far as I know, you were one of those who killed Othman Ibn 'Affān." So he commanded his men to cut off his head!

Mufid says: "This is a hadith that the Sunni have narrated from their authorized narrators (*thiqāt*), as well as the Shi'a in the same way. The outcome is what we have mentioned in the section on miracles and certain affairs."¹⁷⁴

Further, Shaykh Mufid says:

It is in the same way that the historians write; they have narrated it in different ways, such as:

One day, Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf Thaqafi said: "I am waiting for an opportunity to find one of Abu Turāb's companions and then by killing him, get closer to my Creator!" In response to his demand, they told him: "We know no one better than his servant, Qanbar. He is the closest one to him."

Ḥajjāj sent one of his men to fetch him, and he did it at once. Ḥajjāj asked him: "Are you Qanbar?" He answered that he was. Then Ḥajjāj asked: "Are you Abu Ḥamdān?" He answered: "Yes, I am."

Hajjāj asked: "Are you the servant of Ali Ibn Abi Tālib?" Qanbar said: "Allah is my Master and Ali Ibn Abi Tālib is my benefactor."

Hajjāj said: "Now declare that you have strayed from the religion of Ali." He said: "My having strayed from his religion means that you are going to direct me to a better religion than his!"

Hajjāj said: "I am going to be your killer; now choose what kind of killing is better for you." Qanbar said: "I will leave everything to you; do whatever you like." "Why?" Hajjāj asked. Qanbar said: "It is because you will be killed in the same way as you kill me. Imam Ali has made it clear that I will be mercilessly beheaded." So Hajjāj commanded his men to cut off his head.

Shaykh Mufid says: "This is a type of hadith of the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali narrated by authentic chains. It is one of the manifest proofs and miracles and the knowledge that God has given to His apostles, saints, and messenger. It is similar to the previous ones."¹⁷⁵

Ibn Abi al-Hadid has narrated from Muhammad Ibn Mūsā 'Anazī:

Mālik Ibn Ḍamrah Ruwāsī, the companion of Ali, was one of those rare men who had attracted the attention of many to him. He also was a close friend of Abūdhār Qaffārī and had greatly benefitted from his knowledge.

At the time of Banī Umayyad, Mālik Ibn Ḍamrah Ruwāsī used to say:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تُجْعَلْنِي أَشَقَّ الْأَلَانَةِ

"O God, do not assign me the most abject of these three." His friends asked him what those three were. He said:

رَجُلٌ يَرَى مِنْ فَوْقِ طَلَبٍ، وَرَجُلٌ يَقَطَعُ يَدَا، وَرَجُلًا وَلِسَانَهُ وَيَضْلِبُ، وَرَجُلٌ يُوْثُّ عَلَى فِرَاشِهِ

"The man who drops people from a height, the man who cuts off hands and legs and even the tongues of the people and then hangs them—and the man who dies in his bed!"

Some people made fun of him and said: "This is also one of the lies of Abu Turāb's [Ali] invention." 'Anazī, the narrator of the hadith, says: "The one who was dropped down from a height was Hānī Ibn 'Urwah, and the one whose tongue, feet, and hands were cut off and was then hanged was Rushayd Hajārī, and Mālik died in his bed."¹⁷⁶

Also, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has narrated from Ibrahim Thaqafī, Ibrahim Ibn ‘Abbās Nahdī, Mubārak Bajalī, Abu Bakr Ibn ‘Ayyāsh, Mujālid, Sha‘bī, and Ziyād Ibn Naḍr Ḥārithī:

I was in the presence of Ziyād when I saw they brought in Rushayd Hajarī. It was then I came to know he was one of the close companions of Ali.

Ziyād asked him: "What has your friend told you that we are going to do with you?" Rushayd said: "He has said that you are going to cut off my feet and my hands and then hang me." Ziyād said:

أَنَا وَاللَّهِ لَا كَذِبَ حَدِيثَهُ غُلُوًّا سِوَاهُ

"But by God, now I will make it clear that he was a liar; do free him and let him go on his way!"

When Rashīd wanted to leave, Ziyād said: "Stop him, we find nothing better than what your Master has predicted about you; if you are alive, no doubt you are going to create evils for us." So they cut off both his hands and both his feet. When they were cutting them off, Rushayd was saying some words, so Ziyād said: "Hang him to cut off his voice."

Before being hanged, Rushayd said: "You have not yet carried out one of my Master's predictions."

Ziyād said to cut his tongue out as well.

When they drew his tongue out to cut, he asked them to let him say just one word. They did what he asked. Rushayd said: "By God, this action of yours is exactly what my Master predicted. He told me that you would cut out my tongue as well." In any case, they cut out his tongue and then hanged him in public.¹⁷⁷

Further, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has narrated it from Ibrahim Thaqafī, in the book of *Ghārāt* from Ahmad Ibn Hasan Maythamī:

Maytham Tammār was a freed slave of Imam Ali. He used to be a slave of a woman from the tribe of Banī Asad, and Ali purchased him, and before letting him go, he asked him what his name was. He said his name was Sālim. Imam Ali told him: "But the Prophet of God informed me that your father had named you Maytham." Maytham said the Prophet of God was quite right, and he said: "You too, O Master of the Faithful, are telling the truth. By God, my real name is Maytham." The Imam said: "Now return to your first name, and do not let people call you Sālim, because we dislike Abu Sālim."

The narrator of the hadith, Ahmad Ibn Hasan Maythamī, says:

Ali acquainted Maytham with many instances of his common and unseen knowledge, and he mentioned some of them to the people. Upon hearing what he said, some among the people of Kūfa doubted Ali's knowledge, and they accused him of telling lies. And then one day, Ali stood up among some sincere companions as well as those who doubted him and said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ تَوَعَّدْتُمُونِي وَتَوَلَّيْتُ، فَذَاكَ الْيَوْمُ الْكَافِي ابْتَدَرَ مُضْرَاكِ وَتَمَكَّ دِمَاحِي مُنْجَبٌ
يُجِنُّكَ فَذَاكَ الْيَوْمُ الْكَافِي طُنْتُ بِمَنْةٍ يَقْضَى عَلَيْكَ، فَاتَّقِ ذَلِكَ...

"O Maytham, after me they will arrest and hang you. On the second day, they will injure your two nostrils and the blood will run down on your face. On the third day they will beat you to death, so expect that event!"

He continues:

The place they are going to hang you is in front of 'Amr Ibn Hārith's house. You are the tenth one they are going to hang, and your gallows are going to be shorter than those of the others, and I will show you the palm tree that they are going to hang you on."

Two days later, the Imam showed him the same tree. From then on, Maytham would go to the palm-grove to pray and say: "O palm-grove, be blissful; I have been created for you, so you have grown for me!" After the demise of Ali, Maytham always went there and stood in front of a certain palm-tree and renewed his covenant with it, until at last they cut it down, all but a small shoot. From that time on, Maytham went to visit that small shoot. He took care of it so that it would grow into a big palm, and when he met 'Amr Ibn Hārith, he told him: "I am going to be your neighbor, so do respect our neighborhood." However, 'Amr did not understand what Maytham meant, so he asked him: "What! Are you going purchase Ibn Mas'ūd's house or Ibn Ḥakīm's?"

Ahmad Ibn Hasan Maythamī narrates:

That same year, Maytham was killed. He went on a *hajj* pilgrimage, and there he went to meet Umm Salamah. Umm Salamah asked who he was. He answered: "I am from Iraq." Then, Umm Salamah asked about his lineage. Maytham answered: "I am a freed slave of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib." Umm Salamah asked him if he was Haytham. Maytham answered: "But I am Maytham." Umm Salamah said:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ تَمَامَتْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِرَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ فِي جَوْزِ اللَّيْلِ.

"Glory be to God, by God, in the middle of the night, I heard the Prophet was recommending you to Ali."

Maytham asked Umm Salamah where Husayn Ibn Ali was. Umm Salamah answered that he was in the back garden. Maytham said: "Please inform him that I was here and wished to greet him, because, God-willing, we are going to meet each other in the presence of the Creator of the world very soon! However, today there is no way to see him, because I have to leave now."

Umm Salamah offered him some perfume to scent his beard, and Maytham said: "O Umm Salamah, this beard of mine will be dyed with blood very soon!" Umm Salamah asked: "Who has informed you of this?" Maytham said: "My Master has told me so." Umm Salamah, while crying, said:

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بِسَيِّدِكَ وَغَدَاكَ وَهُوَ سَيِّدِي وَسَيِّدُ السَّالِمِينَ

"In fact he is not just your Master; he is Chief and Master of mine and so is he Master of the whole world."

Umm Salamah bid farewell to Maytham, and he set out for Kūfa. Hardly had he arrived in Kūfa that they arrested him and took him to 'Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyād and reported to him: "This is the most sincere companion of Abu Turāb [Ali]." 'Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyād said: "Woe upon you that this non-Arab man has attained such a high position!" They accepted what he said. 'Ubaydullah asked Maytham: "Tell me, where is your God?" He answered: "He is lying in wait for the aggressors!"

'Ubaydullah said: "I have been informed that Abu Turāb loves you more than he loves his other companions, and you have always been his sincere friend and associate." Maytham said: "Yes, in some cases you are right; so now what is your decision about me?" 'Ubaydullah said: "It is said that Abu Turāb has already told you what will happen to you." Maytham said: "Yes, it is true; he has told me everything that will happen to me." 'Ubaydullah asked: "What has he told you about the tortures I will use against you?" Maytham said: "He has let me know that I am going to be the tenth of the ten people to be hanged by you, and my gallows are going to be the shortest ones; that is, I will be closer to the ground than the rest." 'Ubaydullah said: "Now, I will certainly contradict what Abu Turāb has predicted about you."

Maytham said: "Woe upon you, how dare you to oppose the Master? He has informed me exactly according to what the Prophet has informed him, and the Prophet was informed by Gabriel, who was informed by the Almighty God. How can you contradict them all? By God, I am well aware of the place in Kūfa where I will be hanged. I am the first man in Islam on whom they will put bridle as people do to their horses."

‘Ubaydullah commanded his men to put him in prison, and in the meantime, they also sent Mukhtār Ibn Abi Ubaydah Thaqaḥī to prison. While in prison, Maytham told his friend Mukhtār: “You will be freed from this jail and will then fight with those who murdered Husayn. Then you will kill this cruel man who has jailed us now, and then kick and trample on his dead body.”

A few days later, when ‘Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyād called Mukhtār to him and wanted to kill him, a page came from Yazīd saying not to kill Mukhtār but to set him free. It was because Mukhtār’s sister was Abdullah Ibn Omar al-Khaṭṭāb’s wife. Mukhtār’s sister had asked her husband to intercede for him, so Yazīd sent a page to ‘Ubaydullah to release Mukhtār. The page arrived in Kūfa just on time—they had taken Mukhtār out of prison and were going to hang him.

However, when they took Maytham out of prison after Mukhtār to be hanged in public, ‘Ubaydullah said: “By God, I am going to carry out the prophecy of Abu Turāb about you.” But earlier, on the way to ‘Ubaydullah, a man came across Maytham and asked him: “O Maytham, what can help you not be hanged?” Maytham smiled pleasantly and said: “I have been created for this short palm tree, and it has also grown for me!”

When they made Maytham stand close to the gallows, people were gathered around him in front of ‘Amr Ibn Hārith’s house. ‘Amr Ibn Hārith said: “Maytham already told me: ‘I will be your neighbor.’” Therefore, every night ‘Amr commanded his maid to sweep and clean that place, under the gallows, and to scent it.

When they were ready to hang Maytham, he began praising and explaining the superiority of Banī Hāshim and describing the evil acts of Banī Umayyad. It was when he was tied up with the rope. Some people cried out to Ibn Ziyād: “This man is a disgrace to you!” Ibn Ziyād said: “Put the bridle on him to close his mouth”; so Maytham was the first servant of God on whom they put a bridle. Two days had already passed, and blood was running from his nose. When the third day approached, they gave him a hard blow to take away his life, if there was any left. Maytham’s death occurred 10 days before Imam Husayn arrived in Karbalā.¹⁷⁸

In any case, as mentioned earlier, these instances of unseen knowledge that his companions have revealed are not the only ones that Imam Ali taught them, and they partly depend on the companions’ pure and clear consciousness of them; they perceived all the unseen events as clear as crystal.

The sermon of the Imam about his unknown knowledge: in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, he says:

أَرْسَلَهُ دَاعِيًا إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَشَهِيدًا عَلَى الْخَلْقِ، فَلَبَّغَ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّهِ غَيْرَ دَانَ وَلَا مُقَصِّرٍ، وَجَاهِدَ فِي اللَّهِ أَعْدَاءَهُ
غَيْرَ وَاهِنٍ وَلَا مُعْتَصِرٍ، إِمَامًا مَنِ اتَّقَى، وَتَصَرَّعَ مَنْ اهْتَدَى.

"God sent His Prophet as an inviter to the Truth and a witness upon the nation. So without making any mistakes or being negligent in any action, he communicated God's messages to the people. Without making excuses or being idle, he struggled in the path of God. He was the leader and Imam of the pious and was a good guide for those whom he guided."

Among his sermons on this subject is this one:

لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ مَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا طَوَى عَنْكُمْ غَيْبُهُ إِذَا تَخَرَّجْتُمْ إِلَى الصُّعَدَاتِ تَهْكُونَ عَلَى أَعْمَالِكُمْ، وَتَلْتَمِسُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَتَرْكُمُ أَمْوَالَكُمْ لَا حَارِسَ لَهَا وَلَا خَافِئَ عَلَيْهَا، وَلَمْ تُشْكِلْ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ نَفْسَهُ
لَا يَهْتِفُ إِلَى غَيْرِهَا، وَلَكِنَّكُمْ نَبِيَّتُمْ مَا ذَكَرْتُمْ، وَأَمِنْتُمْ مَا حَذَرْتُمْ، فَكَا عَنْكُمْ زَائِكُمْ، وَكُنْتُمْ
عَلَيْكُمْ أَمْرًا كَرًّا إِلَى آخِرِ خُطْبِهِ¹⁷⁹

If you knew what I know about the unseen knowledge hidden from you, then you would leave your houses for the roads and ponder upon your deeds. You would cry like women weeping at the loss of their children. You would beat your head and chest as a sign of mourning. You would certainly leave your properties behind without putting someone in place to guard them. Then everyone's agony and sorrow would make him think of nothing but his own inward pain! However, you are such people that you have forgotten what has been told to you! And you cared not about that which you were prohibited from; therefore, you missed your opinion, and you have erred in [managing] your affairs.

Among the unseen information that Imam Ali has made clear is the account of his own murder and the blood running down his face. You can hardly find a Shi'a or Sunni hadith collection that does not mention this incident that would happen to Ali.

Shādhkūnī has narrated from Ḥammād, from Yahyā, Ibn 'Atīq, and Ibn Sīrīn:

إِنْ كَانَ أَحَدٌ يَعْرِفُ أَجَلَ قَتْلِي بِنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ¹⁸⁰

"If there was a man who knew the time his death, he could only be Ali Ibn Abi Tālib."

Shaykh Mufid in *Irshād* says: "And among the hadiths with different chains of narrators about the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali are the hadiths on the time of his own death, the way he would be stricken on the head with a sword and that his beard would be colored with blood, and then he would die. The incident happened exactly in accordance with his prediction."

The exact phrase that the narrators have used to narrate the hadith is as follows:

وَاللهِ قَسْبَنَ فَرَمِيْنُ مِنْ تَلَوَّحَ بَدَنِي عَلَى رَأْسِي وَبِحَيْثِهِ¹⁸¹

"By God, this [beard of mine] will be dyed with this [head of mine]"—said while pointing to his head and his beard.

He also said:

وَاللهِ قَسْبَنَ بَيِّنَ فَوْقَ أَعْيُنِي أَوْ مَالِي فَيْحِهِ

"And by God, this will be dyed from the top"—said while pointing to his white beard.

He then said:

مَا يَنْهَى أَشَقَّائِي أَنْ يَخْضِبُوا مِنْ فَوْقِهِ بَدَنِي؟

"What has banned the cruelest people from dyeing this beard from top [to bottom]?"

He has also said:

مَا يَمْنَعُ أَشَقَّائِي أَنْ يَخْضِبُوا مِنْ فَوْقِهِ بَدَنِي؟

"What has prevented these cruelest people from dyeing this beard from the top [to bottom]?"

On another occasion he said:

أَتَاكُمْ قَهْرٌ وَمَعَانٍ وَهُوَ يَذُّ الشُّهُورَ وَأَوَّلُ الشَّئَةِ، وَفِيهِ تَلَوُّوْخِي السُّلْطَانِ الْأَوَّلِ كُمْ حَاجُّو
النَّامِ صَفًا وَاسِدًا، وَآيَةُ ذَلِكَ أَنِّي لَأَنْتُ فِيكُمْ¹⁸²

"The month of Ramaḍān approaches; this month is the master of all the other months, and it is the beginning of the year. In this month the mill of power turns around. Be aware that you must all go together on the *hajj* in this month, and the clearest sign and proof is that I will not be with you on this journey."

Some of his companions said: "He is giving us the news of his death." The Imam was struck with a sword on the night of the 19th and passed away on the night of 21st of the same month.

Some reliable narrators have narrated that Imam Ali used to break his fast one evening with Hasan, another evening with Husayn in turn, and the next one with Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās, and he did not have more than three morsels with either of them. Concerning this,

one of his sons—Hasan or Husayn—once asked him to know the secret of it, and he said:

يَا بَنِي، يَا بَنِي أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَأَنَا غَيْرُص. إِمَّا هِيَ لَيْلَةٌ أَوْ لَيْلَتَانِ. فَاصْبِرْ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ.¹⁸³

"O my son, the command is from God, and I love to remain hungry". There remains no more than one night, or maybe two, before he was struck on the head at night.

Among these instances is this hadith that Ju'adat Ibn Ba'ja, who was a man of Khawārij, said to Imam Ali: "O Ali, be wary of God because you are going to die!" Imam Ali answered:

بَلْ وَاللَّهِ مَقْتُولٌ كَلَّا ضَرْبَةً عَلَى هَذِهِ خُصْبٍ هَذِهِ وَوَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ وَيُخَيِّدُ عَهْدُ مَتَّوْدُ، وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ أَفْتَرَى.¹⁸⁴

"Yes, I will be killed with one strike on this [head of mine], and this [beard of mine] will be colored!" As he said this, His Excellency touched his head and beard, saying: "This is a covenant that is already planned and that is unbreakable; and he who lies is lost!"

Further, with regard to the statement of the Imam that at the end of that night, that cruel man would strike the Imam on the head: it was the same night that he was on his way to the mosque and the ducks following him were cackling, and the people tried to keep them from following the Imam. The Imam stated:

أَتَرْكُوهُمْ بَأْنَهُمْ تَوَلَّجَ.¹⁸⁵

"Leave them alone; do not disturb them, for they are mourning!"

In *al-Manāqib*, Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from Imam Ṣādiq:

Ali had commanded his men to record the names of anyone entering Kūfa. So they wrote the names of some people and handed them to the Imam. He read them one by one until he reached the name of Ibn Muljam. Right then he put his finger on the name and said: "May God kill you, may God kill you!" When someone asked the Imam why, if he knew that he was to be his murderer, he did not kill him, the Imam answered: "God does not torture any of His servants until he commits a crime." And sometimes he said: "If I kill him, then who is going to be my murderer?"

Further, Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated from Ṣafwānī in *Iḥān wa Miḥān* from Aṣḥab Ibn Nubātah:

سَمِعْتُ عَلِيًّا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُقْتَلَ بِجُنَّةٍ، يَقُولُ: أَلَا مَنْ كَانَ مَعَهُ تَائِمٌ بَرِيٍّ عَبْدُ الْمَلِكِ فَلْيَنْزِلْ بِي. لَا تَقْتُلُوا عَمِيرَ كَاتِلِي. أَلَا أَلَيْسَ بَيْنَكُمْ غَدَاً يُحِيطُونَ النَّاسَ بِأَسْيَافِهِمْ تَقُولُونَ: قِيلَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.¹⁸⁶

"A week before Ali was murdered, I heard him saying: 'Beware! Do come closer to me, any one of the sons of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib who are here among the people.'" Then he said: "Kill not anyone who is not my murderer. Beware! Let me not find you attacking the people with swords the next day and then saying: 'The Master of the Believers has been killed!'"

In *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah*, Ibn Hajar Haythamī has dedicated section nine of his book to the martyrdom of Ali and has benefitted from many reliable sources from the Sunni scholars concerning the unseen knowledge of the Imam about his own martyrdom and the blood running down on his face. They must really be studied with great attention.¹⁸⁷

The martyrdom of the Imam has been discussed in detail in the translation of *Tārik Aṭṭham Kūfi*.¹⁸⁸

Ibn Athīr Jazarī has narrated from Imam Ali in *Uṣd al-Ghābah*:

قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ أَشَقُّ الْأَوَّلِينَ؟ قُلْتُ: عَاقِرُ النَّاقَةِ قَالَ: صَدَقْتَ
قَالَ؟ فَقَرَأْتُ أَشَقُّ الْآخِرِينَ؟ قُلْتُ: لَا عِلْمَ لِي يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ: الَّذِي يَضْرِبُكَ عَلَى مَهْدَا وَأَنْتَ زَيْدٌ
إِلَى مَا تُؤَخِّرُهُ وَكَأَنَّ يَقُولُ: وَدِدْتُ أَنَّهُ قَدْ أَتَيْتَ أَشَقَّاكَ كَقَبِّ مَهْدِيٍّ مِنْ مَهْدِيٍّ بَنِي لُجَيْئَةٍ مِنْ دَمِ
رَأْسِهِ¹⁸⁹

The Prophet of God asked me: "Who is the most wretched one among the preceding generations?" I said: "It was a man from the tribe of Thamūd who hamstrunged the camel of Ṣāliḥ and killed it." The Prophet said: "You are quite right. Now tell me who is going to be the most wretched among the succeeding generations?" I answered: "O Prophet of God, I have no knowledge about it!" The Prophet (while pointing to the front of my head) said: "He is the one who is going to strike here!"

From then on Imam Ali (while pointing to his head and beard) kept saying: "I would very much love the very wretched man to rise among the community and color this head of mine with blood!"

Further, Ibn Athīr has narrated from Abu Ṭufayl:

إِنْ عَلَيَّ بَتَّ النَّاسُ لِلْحَيَّةِ فَجَاءَ عَهْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ يُطْعِمُ الْمَرَادِي، فَرَدُّهُ مَرَّتَيْنِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: مَا يَجِبُ شُ أَشَقَّاكُمْ؟
فَوَاللَّهِ لَنُضِيبُ مَهْدِيٍّ مِنْ مَهْدِيٍّ ثُمَّ تَمَلَّ
أَشَدَّ حَارِبٍ يَكُ اللَّوْتِ قَبْلَ الْمَوْتِ لَا يَكُ

وَلَا تَجْزَغُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ إِذَا خَلَّ بِوَادِيكَ¹⁹⁰

In fact Ali gathered the people to swear allegiance to him, and Ibn Muljam Murādī went to him twice to pay homage to him, but each time the Imam turned him back. Then he said: "What has prevented the most wretched among the community? By God, he will [strike] and color this head of mine with blood!" Then as an example, he referred to this elegy: "O Ali! fasten your belt and get ready for death, because certainly you are going to face it; and try not to be frightened when it comes to your threshold!"

After explaining the foregoing hadith from Abu Ṭufayl, Ibn Sa'd in *Ṭabaqāt* says:

Besides Abu Nu'aym Faḍl Ibn Dukayn, who has narrated this hadith, others have also mentioned it with some additions to it, such as:

وَاللّٰهُ اِنَّهُ لَمَعْدُ النَّبِيِّ الْاُمِّيِّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّمَ اِلَى

"By God, this is a covenant that the unlettered Prophet has made with me."¹⁹¹

Further, Ibn Sa'd has narrated with his chains from Muhammad Ibn Sirin that Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib told Ibn Muljam:

اُرِدْتُ جَنَاءَ وَوَعِدْتُكَ لِيْ عَزِيْرًا مِنْ غُلَيْلِكَ مِنْ مُرَادٍ

"I have in my mind to reward him, but he wants to kill me; now bring a friend who accepts your excuse from the tribe of Murād and prove it."

In *al-Nihāyah*, Ibn Jazarī has said: "It is written in the hadith of Ali that when he caught sight of Ibn Muljam, he said: 'Bring someone as a witness who accepts your excuse [for your killing me].'"¹⁹²

Ibn Sa'd, by means of his chain of narrators from Abi Mijlaz, has narrated that he said:

While Ali was saying his prayer in the mosque, a man from the tribe of Murād got closer to the Imam and said: "Take care of yourself, because someone from the tribe of Murād has decided to kill you." Imam Ali said:

اِنْ مَعَ كُلِّ رَجُلٍ مَلَكََيْنِ يَحْفَظَانِيْ مَا لَمْ يَقْدُرْ، فَذَا جَاءَ الْقَدَرُ خَلِيَّتِيْ وَنَيْتِيْ وَإِنْ اِلَّا جَلَّ جُنَّةٌ
حَصِيْنَةٌ¹⁹³

"There are two angels for every man who protect him against whatever is not destined. Then when Divine Destiny is against him, those two

angels leave him on his own. The determined life is like a shield for a man; it saves him from any calamity."

Also Ibn Sa'd, through his chain of narrators, has narrated from Ubaydah:

قَالَ عَلِيٌّ: مَا يَجِئُ أَشْقَاكُمْ أَنْ يَجِيءَ فَيَقْتُلَنِي؟ اللَّهُمَّ قَدْ سَتَمْتَهُمْ وَسَمَوْنِي، قَارِخَهُمْ، قَارِخَهُمْ مَعِيَ وَارِخَنِي مِنْهُمْ.

"Who has prevented the most wretched among you from rising up to kill me? O my Creator, I have made him feel depressed; I have tired them, and they have made me tired! So let me be left alone and let them live on their own!"

Furthermore, by means of his chain of narrators, Ibn Sa'd has narrated from Abdullah Ibn Sab' that he had heard Ali saying:

لَحْصَبٍ هَذِهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ فَمَا يَشْطَرُ الْأَشْيَءُ؟ قَالُوا: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَاتِلُ بَنِي عُزَيْرٍ نَدَّاهُ: إِنْ تَقْتُلُوا بِي غَيْرَ قَاتِلِي.

"[While pointing to his head and beard, he kept saying:] Indeed this will be colored with blood, so who is waiting for the most wretched man among the community?" [His companions] said: "O Master of the Faithful, let us know who is going to be that man so we can send him to death!" The Imam answered: "In that case, you will kill someone other than my murderer."

Ibn Sa'd, by means of his chain of narrators from Umm Ja'far, has narrated from the slave-girl of Ali Ibn Abi Tālib:

I was pouring water for Ali to wash his hands when he raised his head, held up his nose with his hand, and said:

وَأَمَّا لَكَ لَحْصَبٌ بِدَمٍ قَالَتْ: فَاصِيبُ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ¹⁹⁴

"Woe upon you! You will be cut and colored."

Umm Ja'far said: "Then they struck him on the head on that Friday!"¹⁹⁵

Furthermore, Ibn Sa'd, through a chain of narrators, has narrated from Muhammad Ibn Hanafiyyah: "I was sitting with Hasan and Husayn in the public bath when we saw Ibn Muljam come in. When he arrived, Hasan and Husayn disliked his appearance, because his condition looked unpleasing. They told him: 'How dare you join us here!'" Ibn Hanafiyyah says: "I told them to get rid of him, but by

God, he would not do anything against them; he had no bad intention against them."

After he struck Ali, when they had arrested him, Ibn Ḥanafiyyah said: "Today, my knowledge about him is not more than on the day I met him in the public bath."

Imam Ali said:

إِنَّهُ أَسِيرٌ فَأَخْسِنُوا زَلَّةً وَأَكْرِمُوا مَوْتَهُ، فَإِنْ بَيْعْتُ كَلَّكَ أَوْ عَفَوْتُ، وَإِنْ مِتُّ فَأَجْلُوهُ قَتْلِي وَلَا تَتَّبِعُونَا، إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّبِعِينَ.¹⁹⁶

"Now he is a captive, so feed him properly and give him good lodging, and if I am alive I will know how to treat him, either to punish him or to let him go; however, if I die of this strike of his, then you too give him only one strike. Do not transgress from that, for God does not like the transgressors."

Further, Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has narrated it in *Tadhkirat Khawāṣṣ al-Umma*, from Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal in *Musnad* through his chain of narrators, from Fuḍāla Ibn al-Anṣārī, whose father, Abu Fuḍāla, was among the fighters of Badr. He has narrated:

My father and I went to visit Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, who was freshly recovered from a sudden disease. My father told him:

مَا يَبْقِيَنَّكَ هَهُنَا بَيْنَ أَغْرَابٍ جَهَنَّةٍ؟ تَحْمِلُ عَلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَإِنْ أَدْرَكَكَ أَجَلُكَ وَلَيْكَ أَصْحَابُكَ وَأَصْحَابُ الْقُرْآنِ، وَصَلُّوا عَلَيْكَ.

"What has made you live here among the harsh Arabs? Leave for Medina and live there; then when your death approaches, you will be given the ritual washing and be buried by your sincere companions and the followers of the Qur'an; and it is they who are going to pray over your corpse."

إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَهْدَ إِلَى أَنْ لَا أَمُوتَ حَتَّى تُخَضَّبَ هَذِهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ أَيْ بِخَيْتِهِ مِنْ دَمِ هَاتِيهِ

To his question, Ali answered: "The Prophet of God has made a covenant with me, promising that I will not die until I see this beard of mine be colored" (that is, his beard would be dyed with the blood running down from his head).

Abu Fuḍāla was the very man who was martyred while attending Ali in the Battle of Siffin.¹⁹⁷

Furthermore, Sibṭ Ibn Juzī says:

According to what Sha'bi says, a few days before his martyrdom, Ali composed this elegy:

بَلِّغْكُمْ قُرَيْشُ بَيْتِي لِيُكَلِّفُونِي فَلَا وَرَيْكَ لَا قُرُوءًا وَلَا عَقْرُوءًا
لَنْ يَبْقِيَ قَوْمُهُمْ نَفْسِي لَكُمْ وَإِنْ عُدْتُ فَلَا يَنْفِي لَكُمْ أَكْزَرُ
وَسَوْفَ يَبْرُدُ لَكُمْ نَفْسِي عَلَى وَجْهِ دَلِّ الْحَيَاةَ بِمَا عَمَلُوا وَمَا عَمَرُوا.¹⁹⁸

O know that the Quraysh wish to kill me; by God, they will not succeed in their demand,
So if I remain alive, they are pledged to my obligation: but if I die, there will remain no sign of them.
But before long, they will feel my loss in fright; it is because of the sedition they have practiced against me.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb, in *al-Manāqib*, says "It is narrated that 'Amr Ibn 'Abdiwad struck and injured Ali on the head with a sword on the day of the Battle of Khandaq. Then when Ali went to the Prophet, he rubbed some saliva on the injury and wrapped it up saying: 'Where am I going to be when this head of yours is dyed with blood?'"¹⁹⁹

Majlisi has narrated many hadiths in *Biḥār al-Anwār* concerning this kind of news from the Prophet, and many reliable hadiths from *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, *Amālī* of Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Amālī* of Shaykh Tūsī, *Khiṣāl* of Ṣadūq, *Irshād* of Mufīd, *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt* of Ṣaffār, *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Tadhkirat Khawāṣṣ al-Umma*, *Kharāyij wa Jarāyih* of Rāwandī, and *Kashf al-Ghumma* and *Farḥat al-Ghurā*.²⁰⁰ Among them, there is a hadith from *Kanz Jāmi' al-Fawā'id* from Abu Ṭāhir Muqallid Ibn Ghālib, from his *Rijāl*, by means of his chain relating to Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, narrating:

The Imam was in a mood for prostrating and weeping. He continued weeping until he began crying aloud. We said: "O Master of the Faithful, your crying sets fire to our hearts; it makes us cry for your sorrow because you have never wept so deeply!" Imam Ali said:

كَتُّ سَاجِدًا أَدْعُو رَبِّي بِدَعَاءِ الصَّغِيرَاتِ فِي مَجْدِكَ، فَتَلْتَمِي عَيْنِي، فَرَأَيْتُ رَبِّي أَمَّا تَقْنِي وَ
فَلْتَقْنِي: رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَتِيمًا وَمَوْفِقُونَ: يَا أَبَا الْحَسَنِ كَالَتْ
غَيْثُكَ هَذَا أَفْضَلُ إِلَيَّ مِنْكَ، وَقَدْ أُنْجَزَ لِي رَبِّي مَا وَعَدَنِي فِيكَ هَلْكَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا
الَّذِي أُنْجَزَ لَكَ فِي؟ قَالَ: أُنْجَزَ لِي فِيكَ وَفِي زَوْجِكَ وَإِنِّيكَ وَفِي زَوْجِكَ فِي التَّوَجُّلِ إِلَى

فِي عَلَيْنَ قُلْتُ: يَا أَبَتِي يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَيَسْتَأْذِنُ قَالَ: شَيْئًا مَسْنَاً، وَفُضُوزُهُمْ بِجَنَادٍ
فُضُوزَنَا، وَمَتَانِ لَهُمْ مُقَابِلَ مَتَانِ لَنَا. قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ: فَمَا لِيَسْتَأْذِنَ فِي الدُّنْيَا؟ قَالَ: الْأَمْنُ وَ
الْمَأْفِيَّةُ

قُلْتُ: فَمَا لَكُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ؟ قَالَ: يَحْكُمُ الرَّجُلُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَيَوْمَرُ مَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ بِطَاعَتِهِ قُلْتُ:
فَمَا لِيْذَلِكَ حَدُّ يَمُوتُ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى، إِنْ أَشَدَّ شَيْئًا لَّنَا حُبًّا يَكُونُ خُرُوجُ نَفْسِهِ كَشَرَابِ أَحَدِكُمْ
فِي يَوْمٍ الْعَيْفِ الْمَاءِ الْهَارِدِ الَّذِي يَنْقَعُ بِهِ الْغُلُوبُ وَإِنْ سَازِرُهُمْ كَمَا يَنْفِطُ أَحَدُكُمْ عَلَى فَرَسِهِ
كَأَقْرَبَ مَا كَانَتْ عَيْنُهُ يَمُوتُهُ

I was bowing down (to prostrate) and asking God for His benevolence when I began to doze off, and I dreamt of a frightening event that drew my attention away from asking God for my needs. I witnessed that the Prophet of God was standing close to me saying: "O Abu al-Hasan, you have been absent too long; I would like to meet you sooner, for God has fulfilled that which He had promised you." I asked: "O Prophet of God, what is it that God has promised to do in my case?" The Prophet of God said: "God has assigned the highest position to you, and to your two sons, as well as your lineage." I asked: "O Prophet of God, may my father and mother be made your sacrifice, then what about our followers?" The Prophet of God said: "Our followers are going to be with us! Their place will be next to our place." Again I asked: "O Prophet of God, may God's peace and blessing be upon you, what is the reward for our followers in this world?" He answered: "It is safety and security from Satan's trick against them."

I asked what their rewards would be at the time of their passing away. He said each one would be allowed to have his own affairs at his disposal, and the Angel of Death was commanded to obey them. I asked if there was anything else to be known. The Prophet stated: "Yes, the followers who have more affection for us, they will die in the easiest way possible. Their deaths will be like drinking cold, fresh water in the hot summer. However, it will be different for the common followers; they always expect prosperity, [so their death] will be like lying in their beds, and their souls will be taken away in ease and pleasantly."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

Abu Bakr Mardawayh has written in *Faḍā'il Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, and Abu Bakr Shirazi in *Nuzūl al-Qur'an*, that Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib said:

Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib was reciting the Qur'an, and when he reached this sentence:

إِذَا تَبَتْ أَفْقَهَا

when the most wretched one stood up to hamstring it [the camel] he [referring to his murderer] said:

فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَتُصَبَّ قَدَمِيْنَ هَذِهِ وَأُخَارَ إِلَىٰ مُجْتَهِدِي وَرَأْسِهِ²⁰¹

"By Him in whose hand my soul is 'this will be dyed with blood'" [all the while pointing to his head and beard].²⁰²

Further, Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

Tha'labī and Wāhidī, by means of the chain of narrators from 'Ammār, Othman Ibn Ṣuhayb, and Ḍaḥḥāk have narrated it, and Ibn Mardawayh with his chain of narrators from Jābir Ibn Samara has narrated the same. Further, Ṭabarī and Moṣulī from 'Ammār and Ibn 'Addī and Ḍaḥḥāk have narrated it, and Khaṭīb in *Tārikh Baghdad* has narrated the same from Jābir Ibn Thamarah, and Ahmad Ḥanbal from Ḍaḥḥāk that the Prophet stated:

بَاعِلِ أَشَقَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ عَاقِرَ الْآفَاقَةِ، وَأَشَقَّ الْآخِرِينَ قَاتِلَهُ²⁰³

"O Ali, the most wretched ones in the past were those who hamstrunged the camel of Ṣāliḥ, and the most wretched one in the future will be your murderer!"

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says: "Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Muljam Tajawbī Murādī has narrated from 'Abbās that he was from the children of Qaddār, the hamstringer of Ṣāliḥ's camel. The stories of the both Ibn Muljam and Qaddār are the same. Similar to how Qaddār who fell in love with a woman called Rabāb, Ibn Muljam too fell in love with Qaṭām."²⁰⁴

Then he says:

Abu Mikhnaf Azdī, Ibn Rāshid, Rifā'ī, and Thaqaḥī all say that several of the Khawārij came together in Mecca and made a decision, saying: "We are to sacrifice our souls to God; it would better to go to the leaders who have gone astray to disgrace them and free the towns from their disgrace!"

'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Muljam said: "I am enough for Ali." Ḥajjāj Ibn Abdullah Sa'dī, who was known as Barak, said: "I am also enough for Mu'āwiyah." And Omar Ibn Bakr Tamīmī said: "I suffice for 'Amr Ibn 'Āṣ." So they made an appointment on the 19th of Ramaḍān and then separated.

Ibn Muljam went to Kūfa and met a man of the Khawārij from Taym, Taym al-Kabāb, in the presence of Qaṭām Taymiyah. Imam Ali had already killed Qaṭām's father, Akhdar Taymī, and Qaṭām's brother, Asbagh, in the Battle of Nahrawān. When Ibn Muljam caught sight of Qaṭām, he fell in love with her and asked her to marry him. Qaṭām also accepted his proposal, as 'Abdī has composed in this elegy:

فَلَمْ أَرْ مَهْرًا سَاقَهُ دُوسَمَاحَةً كَثُفَرِ قَطَامٍ مِنْ قَصِيحٍ وَأَنْجَمٍ
ثَلَاثَةَ آلَافٍ وَعَبْدٌ وَفِئْتَةٌ وَضَرْبٌ عَلَى الْخَصَامِ التَّسَمُّ
فَلَا مَهْرًا غَلَى مِنْ عَلِيٍّ وَإِنْ غَلَا وَلَا كُفْلَ الْأُتُونِ كُلِّ ابْنِ مُلْجَمٍ²⁰⁵

I have never seen a man as generous as with Qaṭām among the Arabs and non-Arabs, to send such an excessive dowry to his wife.

Around three thousand *dirhams*, a slave, and a slave-girl, and striking Ali on the head with a poisoned sword,

Thus no dowry is more costly than Ali's [blood, even if that dowry is costly], no killing is less than Ibn Muljam's killing!

Ibn Muljam accepted it and inwardly said: "Woe upon you! Who dares to kill Ali, who is unique among the cavaliers, and is victorious among the bravest men, and so is he the best at using the sword and throwing spears! However, cost is not important; I can pay it [for love]." Then when Qaṭām explained to Ibn Muljam how to kill Ali, Ibn Muljam revealed his secret by saying: "I have come to Kūfa just to kill Ali!"

Then Qaṭām sent for Wardān Ibn Mujālid Taymī, who was from the tribe of Khawārij, to help Ibn Muljam in his plan. On the other side, Ibn Muljam also asked Shabīb Ibn Bajahrah to help him carry out his plan. For encouraging and supporting Ibn Muljam, one of 'Amr Ibn 'Ās's men sent him one hundred thousand *dirhams* to pay to Qaṭām as her dowry.

On the night of the 19th of Ramaḍān, Qaṭām made a meal of walnuts and almonds for Ibn Muljam and Shabīb and offered them a special wine.

After eating the meal and drinking the wine, Shabīb fell asleep, and Ibn Muljam went to bed with Qaṭām. The night passed and Qaṭām awakened them and tied their chests with silk to protect them. They collected their swords, got ready, and lay in ambush by the entrance of Saddah to attack Ali. Ash'ath Ibn Qays was also inside the mosque to help them, so he was instructing Ibn Muljam in how to carry out his duty. He told Ibn Muljam: "Hurry up, hurry up. Do not waste time! Act swiftly, or the night will come to an end and you will lose the opportunity."

Hujr Ibn ‘Addī, who was a close companion of Ali, was also inside the mosque, and came to know the evil plan of Ibn Muljam, so he turned to Ash‘ath, telling him: “What! Are you also going to help him to kill Ali?” So he decided to go to Ali to inform him of what was happening, but hardly had he done anything when Imam Ali entered the mosque, and Ibn Muljam gave him the first blow to the head.²⁰⁶

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says that Imam Hasan composed this elegy on the death of his father, Imam Ali:

أَيْنَ مَنْ كَانَ لِيَلِمَ الْمُصْطَفَى لِلنَّاسِ يَا أَيْنَ مَنْ كَانَ إِذَا مَا حُطَّ النَّاسُ سَعَاهَا
أَيْنَ مَنْ كَانَ إِذَا أُودِيَ فِي الْحَرْبِ أَجَابَهَا أَيْنَ مَنْ كَانَ دُعَاهُ مُسْتَجَابًا وَجَبَاهَا.²⁰⁷

Where is he who was a gate for Muṣṭafā’s knowledge?
Where is he who was a cloud for the people at the time of drought?
Where is he who when called to battle was there at once,
Where is he whose prayer was responded to on the spot?

The Prophet has said:

مَنْ زَارَ عَلِيًّا بَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ فَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ.²⁰⁸

“Whoever visits [the shrine of] Ali after his demise, for him is Paradise.”

Imam Ṣādiq has said:

مَنْ تَرَكَ زِيَارَةَ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَمْ يَنْظُرِ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ، أَلَا تَرَوْنَ مَنْ تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْمَلَكَ وَمِثْلَهُ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ.

“Whoever avoids visiting Ali, the Master of the Faithful, God will not cast a glance on him. What! Do you not visit someone whom the angels and the messengers visit?”

It was also said by the Imam:

إِنَّ أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ تَنْفَعُ عِنْدَ دُعَاءِ الزَّائِرِ لِأَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، فَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَيْرِ قَوَامًا.

“The entrances of the heavens open when the pilgrims to Ali’s shrine pray; therefore, take care not to neglect this blessing and benevolence!”

Ibn Mudallal has said:

زُودَ الْقَرَى الْعَالِيَةَ زَيْنًا عِلْمَ الْهَدَى وَدَعَائِمِ الْإِيمَانِ 1
وَقُلِ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا خَيْرَ الْوَرَى يَا أَمَانَ النَّبَا الْعَظِيمِ الشَّانِ 2
يَا مَنْ عَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ يَمُرُّ فَضْلُهُ يَا كَاسِمَ الْجَنَابِ وَالْتِرَانِ 3

نَارُ تَكُونُ قَسِيمَهَا عَذِيقِي أَتَا مِنْ مِّنْهَا عَلَى جُمْلَانِي 4
 أَتَا حَافِيكَ وَالْمَجْتَانِ إِلَى الْقَرَى إِذْ أَنْتَ أَنْتَ مُوَرِّدُ الضَّيْفَانِ. 209

[While in Najaf] visit the divine sage who is the sign of guidance and the well-built pillar of the faith,
 And say: "Peace upon you, the best of creatures, O you who are the great good tidings.
 "O you whose eminence and nobility will come into sight when you are standing on the Height [at the resurrection],
 "O you the divider of Heaven and Fire.
 "O my shelter, O my reservoir, do protect me from the Fire that you are going to divide,
 "So the heavens and I are all your guests, on that spot when the gifts are given to the guests; at that moment only you will be standing at the entrance for the guests!"

It is written on his gravestone:

مَنْ دَاوَى اللَّهَ فِي أَرْضِهِ فِي جَنَّةِ الْخُلْدِ وَالْآلِيهِ
 لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ لَدُنْكَ زَائِرًا لَمْ يَزِمْ سَائِرًا غَدَائِهِ. 210

This is the authorized saint in the land of God, in His eternal Paradise and blessings,
 God will not accept the visitations of those pilgrims who do not keep away from his enemies.

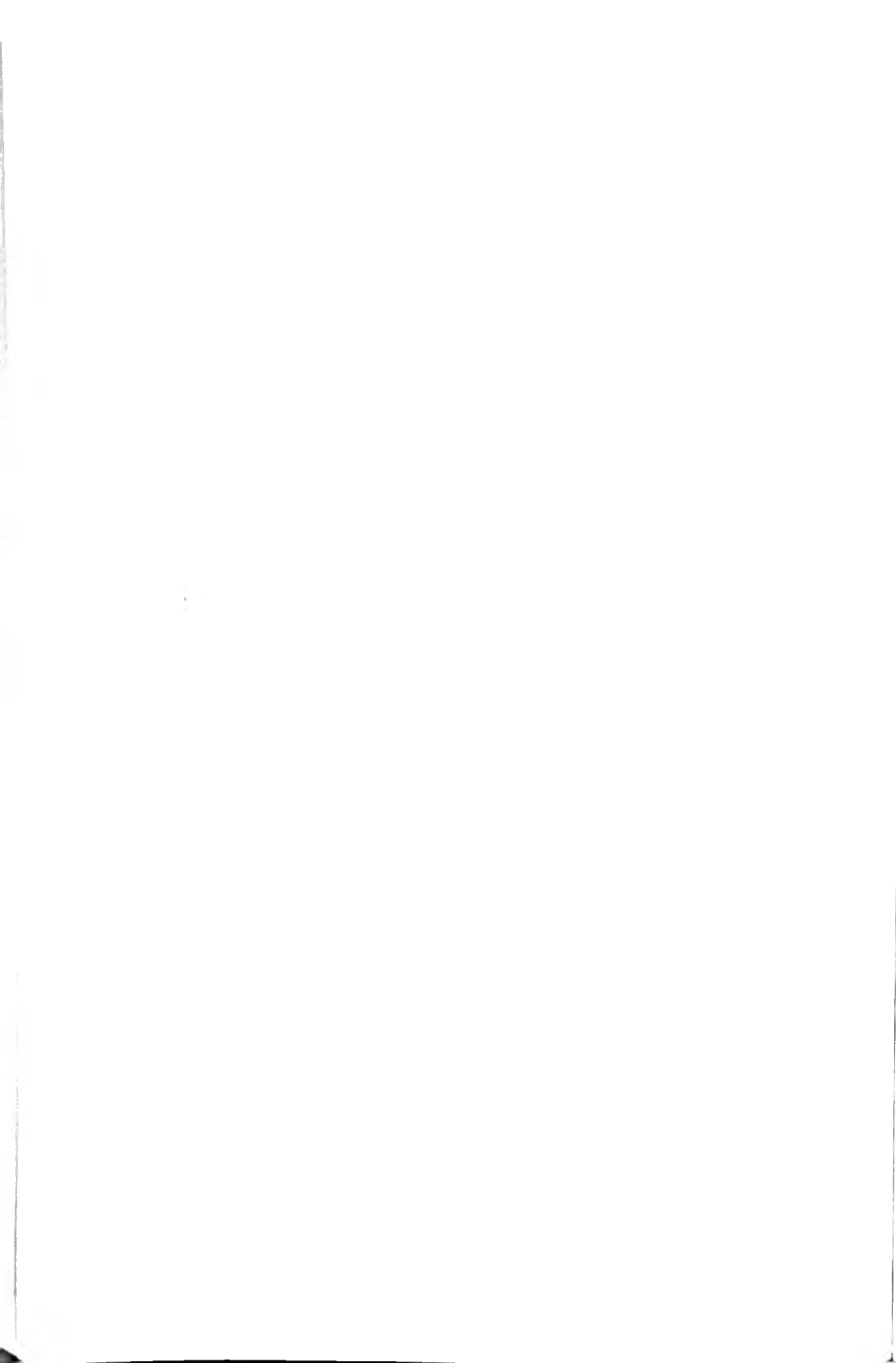
And Ibn Ruzzāik says:²¹¹

كَلَّنِي إِذَا جِئْتُكَ إِلَيْكَ قَصْدِي قَصْدُكَ الرُّكْنَ بِالْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ 1
 وَغُيِّلَ لِي بَالِي فِي مَقَامِي لَدَيْهِ بَيْنَ زَمَزَمَ وَالْمَقَامِ 2
 أَمَا تَوَلَّاهُ ذِكْرُكَ فِي حُودَى وَأَمَا تَوَلَّاهُ ذِكْرُكَ فِي قِيَامِي 3
 وَأَنْتَ إِذَا اتَّهَمْتُ سَمِيرَ فِكْرِي كَذَلِكَ أَنْتَ أَنْسَى فِي مَنَامِي 4
 وَحُبُّكَ إِنْ يَكُنْ قَدْ دَخَلَ قَلْبِي وَفِي نَحْمَى اسْتَكْنَى وَفِي عِظَامِي 5
 فَلَوْلَا أَنْتَ لَمْ يَقْبَلْ صَلَاتِي وَلَوْلَا أَنْتَ لَمْ يَقْبَلْ صِيَامِي 6
 عَنِّي اسْقِ بِكَاءِكَ يَوْمَ حَشَرِي وَسَيَرِّدْ حِينَ أُشْرِيهَا أَوَايَ 7 212

1. Whenever I think of you, as if I think of Hajar al-Aswad in the House of God,
2. I assume that I am standing in my position between Zamzam and the position of Ibrahim, but close to Ali,
3. O my Master, your memory is with me when I am sitting, and O my Master, I am in your memory when I am standing,
4. And when I get up, you are my companion, my bosom friend, and so are you my sincere companion in my sleep,
5. Your affection has truly entered into my heart and has settled in and mixed with my bones and flesh.
6. So if you were not there, my prayer would never have been accepted, and if you were not there, my fasting would not be accepted.
7. I also hope, on the Day of Resurrection, to quench my thirst from the bowl of yours, and then when I drink, my scorching thirst will be quenched.

**Lessons One Hundred Seventy-Four
to One Hundred Seventy-Six**

**The Different Kinds of Knowledge
of Imam Ali That Have Become
Known to Everyone**



LESSONS ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FOUR TO ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SIX

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

And blessings be upon Muhammad and his pure Household, and
may God's curse be on his enemies from now until the Day of Res-
urrection! And there is no power or strength except for the Lofty
Glorious God.

The Wise God has stated in His Glorious Book:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ تَرَجَّلُوا وَلِلَّهِ يَتَمَتَّلُونَ غَيْرِ

...so that God may promote those of you who believe and those who have
been granted knowledge—for God is well aware of what you do... (58:11).

The first part of the verse is:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا اِذَا قِيْلَ لَكُمْ فَتَحُوا مَجَالِسَكُمْ فَتَحُوا بِمَقَامِكُمْ وَاِذَا قِيْلَ اَقْرَبُوا فَاقْرَبُوا

...O you who believe, when it is said [to you] to make room [for your
brothers] in assemblies, so make room, so that God may make opportunity
for you [in paradise]. And when it is said, "Stand up!", then stand up
(58:11).

‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī in his *al-Mizān* has said:

...the meanings of *tafalīḥuṣ* and its derivation *faṣḥ* in Arabic is "offering
a place to someone to sit in the gatherings and sessions." The term
majālis is the plural form of *majlis* (the place for sitting). Thus, it means:
when you are asked to sit closer to the next one in a session and give a
chance to a new guest to sit, you have to sit closer and give him a place
to sit. In return, as a reward, God will give you a spacious place in Par-
adise.

However, the verse denotes a kind of moral and theological con-
cept by saying that the people in the presence of the Holy Prophet
used to sit so close together that a newly arriving one could not find
a place to sit. Therefore, by this verse, the way to sit in a session be-
came clear. This attitude could be a moral rule for all believers.

And the statement of God:

وَاِذَا قِيْلَ اَقْرَبُوا فَاقْرَبُوا

"When you are said to stand up, do stand up," denotes another good
behavior. The term *nashūz* in Arabic means if in a session a newcomer
enters the place, the previous one should stand up in his respect and

honor and give him a place to sit. Therefore, it means: "And when it is said to you to stand up from your place and give a chance to a newly arriving scholar and the most learned one to sit, do the same."

The statement *so that God may raise you in rank and make an opportunity for you* [in paradise] means that God raises a servant in rank and takes him closer to Him. It is quite reasonable to assume that the verse refers to the sincere believers and the most learned among the believers—but not one who is weak in his belief!

Therefore, this verse divides the Muslims into two groups of ordinary believers and learned believers. It also says that a learned believer is better than a believer. God, the Almighty, states:

مَلْ يُسَوِّى الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ؟

Are those who know and those who do not know equal? (39:9).

That which has been said so far makes it clear that the real meaning of *those who are given rank and position* is the learned ones; there is only one degree of higher position for the common believers! Thus the meaning of the verse is: God gives one rank to each believer, but for the learned there are several ranks and positions.

Further, in this verse, the rank and position of the learned has been explained as being such a high degree that everyone finds it his duty to respect them, and God in the following verse has emphasized it as

وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

*And God is aware of what they do.*²¹³

Imam Ali received the essence of Monotheism from the noble Prophet and his deeply rooted morality and constant reflection and wayfaring to infinite universes, to which he gave a place in his very being, reaching the highest position of a Perfect Man. In these sermons and lectures he has commented on the glorious essence of the Divine Unity and His attributes. All these are from his secret and inner perceptions through knowledge by presence and unveilings, as the illuminating sun unveils the kernel of the secret and introduces it to the world.²¹⁴

In this respect, we will benefit from that which Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has mentioned at the beginning of *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, and that which Ibn Shahr Āshūb has mentioned in *al-Manāqib*.

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, in his preface, while explaining the natural and innate virtues of the Imam, briefly enumerates all his knowledge, and he clarifies that the Imam was the innovator and originator of this knowledge. Having explained the virtues of Imam Ali, he says:

وما أقول في رجل تمزى إليه كل فضيلة وتنهى إليه كل فقرة، وتجاهذه كل طائفة؟ فهو رئيس الفضائل وينوعها، وأبو عندها، وسابق مضمارها، ومجلى حلبيها. كل من يزغ فيها يضل فمته أخذ، ولما اتقى، وعلى مثاله احتذى.

What can I say about a man in whom every virtue is traced, and in whom all groups end, and to whom all sects are attracted! They fight each other to find a way to get closer to him.

Therefore, he is the master of all eminence, he is the gushing spring of all knowledge, he is the proof (*hujja*), he is the perfect example of virtue and morality. He over-speeds and is the winner of all destinations and aims, and so is he overcomes any hurdles on his way to reach eminence. Whoever would try to obtain eminence after him, he should obtain it from him—that is, he should seek to follow his example.

Then he says:

And now you know that the best knowledge is the divine knowledge and getting to know the Lofty God. Because the honor of every kind of knowledge follows the honor of the knowledge that is discussed, and the subject of the divine knowledge is the best knowledge, therefore, the divine knowledge is the best among all knowledge. Whatever they have said and interpreted of this knowledge, is from Ali, and they have drawn it from the main source of his knowledge and narrated it. In one way or another, they have obtained everything from the main source. The Mu'tazilah for example have learned and borrowed most of their theological principles from the companions of the Imams. Wāṣil Ibn 'Aṭā was the student of Abu Hāshim, who was Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ḥanafiyyah, and Abu Hāshim was the student of his father, Muhammad, and his father was the student of Imam Ali.²¹⁵

However, the Ashā'irah are related to Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn (Ismā'īl Ibn) Abi Bushr Ash'arī, who was the student of Abu Ali Jubā'ī, and Abu Ali was one of the students of the shaykh of the Mu'tazilah, Wāṣil Ibn 'Aṭā. Therefore, the Ashā'irah were also related to the teacher of the Mu'tazilah, whose teacher was Ali Ibn Abi Tālib.

The relation of the Imamiyyah and Zaydiyyah to the Imam is quite clear.

Furthermore jurisprudence is among the sciences, and Imam Ali is the main source of it. Every jurisprudent in Islam benefits from the knowledge of his jurisprudence.

However, the companions of Abu Ḥanīfah, such as Abu Yūsuf, Muhammad, and the others have obtained the knowledge of their jurisprudence from Abu Ḥanīfah.

Moreover, Shāfiʿī has studied with Muhammad Ibn Hasan; therefore, his jurisprudence also returns to Abu Ḥanīfah.

Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal studied with Shāfiʿī, so the source of his jurisprudence is also Abu Ḥanīfah; and Abu Ḥanīfah studied with Jaʿfar Ibn Muhammad, and Jaʿfar Ibn Muhammad studied with his father; therefore, their source is also Ali.

Further, Mālik Ibn Anas studied with Rabiʿah al-Raʿy, and Rabiʿah al-Raʿy studied with ʿIkrama, and ʿIkrama studied with Abdullah Ibn ʿAbbās, and Abdullah Ibn ʿAbbās studied with Ali Ibn Abi Tālib.

Further, Shāfiʿī's jurisprudence goes back directly to Imam Ali, and so does the jurisprudences of the companions, such as Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Abdullah Ibn ʿAbbās. Both of them attained their jurisprudence from Ali Ibn Abi Tālib. It is clear in Ibn ʿAbbās's case. However, the story is different in the case of Omar. Everyone knew that he would refer to Ali Ibn Abi Tālib in his difficulties, and many people heard that Omar said many times: "If Ali were not there, Omar would perish," and: "O God, let me not be alive if Ali is not with me to solve my problems."

He also said: "As long as Ali is present in the mosque, no one has the right to give his opinion!" So it is obvious that the knowledge of jurisprudence refers to Ali Ibn Abi Tālib.

Also, Shi'a and Sunni scholars have narrated that the Prophet said: "The most accurate in judging among you is Ali. Ali is the most knowledgeable in jurisprudence among you."²¹⁶

All the scholars have narrated that when the Prophet sent Ali to Yemen as the judge, he prayed: "O God! Direct his heart to the right judgment and strengthen his tongue."

Imam Ali said:

فما شككت بعد ما في قضاء بين اثنين

"After that [the prayer of the Prophet], I did not doubt when judging between two people."

It was Ali who judged the case of a woman who gave birth to a baby after six months. It was he who gave his verdict about the woman who had committed adultery. And it was he who gave his piece of advice about the question of *minbariyyah*.²¹⁷

As for the science of commentary (*tafsir*) on the Qur'an, the main source of this knowledge has been received from Ali and through the time it altered in different method and school of this science. The

majority of *tafsirs* are borrowed from Ali's book or from Ibn 'Abbās. Almost all scholars know how attentive a companion Ibn 'Abbās was to Ali. In fact, Ibn 'Abbās was his student and the authentic witness of Ali's school of interpretation of the Qur'an.

They asked Ibn 'Abbās: "Compared to your cousin, how great is your knowledge?" He answered: "It is like a drop of rain in the middle of a vast ocean"

Among the sciences is the knowledge of the spiritual path, the reality of Islamic mysticism, which is rooted in the teachings of Iman Ali. This has been approved by Shiblī, Junayd, Sarrī, Abu Yazīd Baṣṭāmī, Abu Mahfūz Ma'rūf Karkhī, and some mystics.²¹⁸

Among the sciences, there is also Arabic syntax. Arabic grammarians know that it was Ali who created this science and was the founder of it. He explained and dictated its rules to Abu al-Aswad Du'alī, the result of which is considered to be one of the Imam's spelling-books. It is known to Arabic grammarians:

الكلام كله ثلاثة أشياء: اسم وفعل وحرف.

"A sentence is made of three parts: noun, verb, and preposition."

Dividing a noun into known and unknown is from the Imam and so is the division of the different spelling.²¹⁹

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd states another matter in which Imam Ali has eminence, which is his eloquence, and says: "He was the leader of all orators and the master of those fluent in speech." About his speech he said:

دون كلام الخالق وفوق كلام المخلوق.

"[His speech] was below divine speech and above the speech of creatures."

People have learned how to write Arabic and make speeches from him. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ibn Yaḥyā says: "I memorized 70 sermons out of the endless sermons of the Imam that gushed forth like a spring."

And Ibn Nubātah says:

حفظت من الخطبة كنز الالين من الإنفاق الأسعة وكثرة، حفظت مائة فصل من مواعظ علي بن أبي طالب.

"I have gained great treasure from the sermons of Ali and then saved it, and now the more I spend, the more my knowledge increases; I have memorized a hundred subjects of the sermons of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib."

As Miḥfan Ibn Miḥfan said to Mu'āwīyah: "I have come to you from a man [Ali] who is the most unable man when it comes to speech." Mu'āwīyah told him:

وعلما، كيف يكون أعيا الناس؟ فوالله ما من القاصحة لقرش غير

"Woe upon you! How can he be the most unable man when it comes to speech? By God, no one is fluent and no one is rooted in the eloquence of speech among the Quraysh save Ali!"

The book *Nahj al-Balāghah*, which we use in the present volumes, is enough to prove that no one is more fluent in speech than Ali. Out of dozens of works about this book, I refer you to that of Abu Othman Jāḥiz, in the book *al-Bayān wa al-Tabyīn*, and some other books of his that have been written about the important influence of this book on Arabic literature.²²⁰

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, after explaining his piety and moral aptitude and the constancy of his prayers, says:

Ali's recitation of the Qur'an and his caring for it is one of the most important thing we are going to take into consideration now. The Shi'a and Sunni scholars and jurisprudents unanimously agree that Imam Ali memorized the Qur'an at the time of the Holy Prophet. There was no one like him at that time. After the Prophet, he was the first one to put the pages of the Qur'an in order to compile it.

All of them with no exception have narrated that he avoided paying homage to Abu Bakr, that he postponed it. The Sunnis' opinions are not like those of the Shi'a, who say Ali postponed paying homage to Abu Bakr because he opposed him; they say Ali was busy with collecting the Qur'an, because if the Qur'an had been compiled at the time of the Prophet, then there would be no need to bring it together after the demise of the Prophet.

On the other hand, when you refer to textbooks, you find that the chief writers and orators have referred to Ali in their works, such as Abi 'Amr Ibn 'Āṣim Ibn Abi al-Najwūd and some others, because, to begin with, they have referred to Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān Salāmī Qānī and Abu 'Abd al-Raḥmān, who was a student of Ali, and who also learned the Qur'an from him. In any case, the art of recitation, like the other arts, leads you to him.²²¹

These are the subjects that Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, while enumerating the areas of eminence of the Imam, has mentioned in the preface of his book *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*.

However, Ibn Shahr Āshūb has a preface to a section in *al-Manāqib*, under the title of *fi al-musābiqah bi al-'ilm*. In this section, he

has mentioned all the important kinds of knowledge of the Imam. Ibn Shahr Āshūb says: "Why can Ali not be considered the most learned one, as he was with the Prophet all the time? He was in his presence at home and in the mosque. It was he who was writing and recording the revelations, and was asking for the verdicts of the Prophet while writing them down."

It has been narrated that when revelations were sent down to the Prophet at night, he would tell them to Ali before sunrise, and when revelations were sent down during the day, the Prophet would tell him before sunset.

It is a well-known hadith that when he wanted to ask ten questions of the Prophet, he first donated one *dinar* and then began asking his questions. The result was that each question opened a thousand mysterious doors for him, and then each one of those doors opened a thousand more doors of knowledge for him.²²² It is here that Sharīf Ibn al-Riḍā says:

يا بنى اٰحمد انذركم اليوم وانتم غدا الردجواي
 الف باب اعطيتكم ثم افضى كل باب منها الى الف باب
 لكم الامر كله والى حكم ولديكم يؤول فصل الخطاب²²³

O sons of Ahmad, today I am calling you, and the next day you are going to answer me!

You have been presented with a thousand gates, each one leading to a thousand more gates,

The whole command and affair of the Guardian rests in your hands; the source is with you, and so does its return to you. It is a fact that separates the right from the wrong, and puts a barrier between intellect and emotion!

The extraordinary affair of Imam Ali is that almost all the scholars have benefited from his knowledge and teachings; therefore, his command and sayings are milestones and must be carried out by all.

Imam Ali Was a Compiler of the Qur'an

Shirazi in *Nuzūl al-Qur'an*, and Shirazi and Abu Yūsuf Ya'qūb in their *Tafsīrs* from Ibn 'Abbās, have said the following about this statement of God:

لا تحرك به لسانك

"Do not move your tongue when reciting the Qur'an." It is narrated that whenever a revelation was sent down to the Prophet, he moved his tongue to recite and memorize it. So he was informed:

لا تحرك به لسانك (يعنى بالقرآن) لتجمل به (من قبل أن يفرغ به من قراته عليك) إن علينا جمعه و
قرآنه

Do not move your tongue [when reciting the Qur'an], hurrying to memorize it [before its meaning that is coming to you is complete], for indeed it is with Us to bring it together and then to recite it to the people (75:16-18).

Ibn 'Abbās has said: "God has promised Muhammad that after the demise of the Prophet, Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib would put the Qur'an together, that is, compile it." Ibn 'Abbās continues: "Therefore, God amassed the whole Qur'an in the heart of Ali, and after the demise of the Prophet, Ali put the pages together and made a book in six months."

It is stated in the book *Akhbār Abu Rāfi'*:

إن النبي عليه السلام قال في مرضه الذي توفي فيه لملي: يا علي هذا كتاب الله، خذ به إليك فجمعه علي في ثوب فمضى إلى منزله فلما قبض النبي صلى الله عليه وآله جلس علي فألقه كما أنزله الله وكان به عالماً.

"During the illness after which the Prophet passed away, he told Ali: 'O Ali, this is the Book of God; take it with you.' So Ali wrapped the book in a cloth and took it to his home. When the Prophet of God passed away, he remained at home and, according to what God had commanded him, he put the pages of the Qur'an together and compiled it, for Ali had the knowledge of the Qur'an."

Abu al-ʿAlā ʿAṭṭār and Muwaffaq Khaṭīb Khārazm have narrated in their books through the chains of ʿUli Ibn Ribāh:²²⁴

إن النبي أمر علياً بتأليف القرآن، فألقه وكبه

"Indeed the Prophet command Ali to compile the Qur'an, and Ali collected it and then wrote it down."

Jabalat Ibn Suḥaym²²⁵ narrates his father as quoting Imam Ali as saying:

لو شئ لي الوسادة وعرف لي حق لأخرجت لهم مصحفاً كتبه وأملاه علي رسول الله

"If they had known me and assigned me my right position, I would have presented them my Qur'an that the Prophet of God had dictated to me."

The Sunni scholars also narrate that:

إنه إنما أبطأ على عليه السلام عن بيعة أبي بكر لتأليف القرآن.

"Ali delayed paying homage to Abu Bakr just in order to compile the Qur'an."

Abu Nu'aym says in *Hilliyat al-Awliyā'*, as well as Khaṭīb in *Arba'īn* with his own chain of narrators from Suddi, that that 'Abd al-Khayr has narrated from Ali that:

لما قبض رسول الله أقسمت أو حلفت أن لا أضع رداى عن ظهري حتى أجمع ما بيننا وبين المؤمنين فما وضعت رداى حتى جمعت القرآن.

"When the Prophet of God passed away, I decided not to take off my robe [not to rest] until I finished whatever was within the pages of the Qur'an; therefore, I did not take my robe from my shoulders until I finished compiling the Qur'an."

It has been narrated in the hadith of the Imams that:

إنه آلى أن لا يضع رداءه على عاتقه إلا للصلوة حتى يؤت القرآن ويجمعه. فانقطع عنهم مدة إلى أن جمعه ثم خرج إليهم به في إزار محمله وهم مجتمعون في المسجد، فانكروا مصيره بعد انقطاع مع الهبة²²⁶، فقالوا: الأمر ما جاء به أبو الحسن²²⁷. فلما توسطهم وضع الكتاب بينهم ثم قال: إن رسول الله قال: إني محض فيكم ما إن تمسكتم به لن تضلوا: كتاب الله وعترتي أهل بيتي. وهذا الكتاب وأنا المترد. فقام إليه الثاني فقال له: إن يكن عندك قرآن فندنا مثله، فلا حاجة لنا فيكم كما فعل عليه السلام الكتاب وعاده بعد أن ألزمهم الحجة.

He [Ali, made a firm decision and] swore that he would not take off his robe, except when saying the prayers, until he finished compiling the Qur'an.

Therefore, he kept away from them for a while to collect the Qur'an. After finishing it, he wrapped it in his waist-cloth and took it with him. Those people that Ali had kept away from were sitting in the mosque. They had in their minds that Ali was going to keep away from them for good, and never expected to see him again, but when they saw him walk into the mosque, they wondered why he was there!

When Imam Ali was among them, he showed them God's Book and said: "Truly the Prophet of God said: 'I am going to leave with you two

things as the caliph and my successor, and if you take a shelter in them, you will never get lost. They are the Book of God and my Household.' Now, this is the Book of God, and I am the Household!" Then a certain man stood up and said: "If the Qur'an is with you, it is with us as well, so we do not need you as the second one!" Ali, after giving them a final ultimatum, took the Book with him and left the mosque.

There is a lengthy report from Imam Ṣādiq saying:

اتمحلله وروى راجعاً نحو حجرته وهو يقول: قُبُوءُ ذَرَاءِ طُحُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَاهُ بِمَنَاقِيلٍ لَا فَيْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ. وَهُوَ أَقْرَأُ مِنْ مَسُودٍ: إِنَّ عَلِيًّا جَمَعَهُ وَقَرَأَهُ فَنَذَاهُ فَاتَّبَعُوا قِرَاءَتَهُ.

He took the Qur'an with him to his chamber, and while was reciting this verse, they cast the Book behind their backs, and sold it for a petty price! What a bad transaction they made (3:187)!

Certainly it was Ali who put the pages of the Qur'an together and compiled it, so that after it was collected you may refer to it and follow it.²²⁸

Nāshī says:

جَمَعَ وَحْيَ اللَّهِ إِذْ فَرَّقَهُ مِنْ رَامٍ جَمَعَ آيَةً فَصَاحِبُ
أَشْكَلَهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ يَجْمَعُهُ فَاسْتَجْمَعَ²²⁹ أَحْرَفَهُ حِينَ نَقَطَ.

"Ali is the collector of the revelations of God; he placed the pages separately, while noboday could put them together, in the [right] order."

Omar, because of his ignorance, doubted the Qur'an that Ali had compiled. When Ali put a dot instead of a letter, he wondered about it when he looked at it.

‘Awnī says:

لَا رَأَى الْأَمْرَ قَبْلَ الدُّخُلِ حَزَنِي جَمَعَ الْكُتُبَ النَّزْلَ.

"When Ali saw that his nomination [for the Guardianship and the Caliphate] was being disputed, he secluded himself to compile the Book."

Ṣāhib says:

هَلْ مِثْلُ جَمْعِ الْقُرْآنِ تَعْرِفُهُ لِقَظًا وَمَعْنَى وَتَوَلَّى لَا وَتَبَيَّنَ.²³⁰

"[O Ali,] has anyone compiled the Book like you, carefully considering it letter by letter, preserving the meaning and the sense of it?"

Khaṭīb Munih says:

عَلَى جَمْعِ الْقُرْآنِ جَمًّا يَقْضِرُ عَنْهُ جَمْعُ الْجَامِعِينَ.

"For the compilation of the Qur'an, Ali is the best collector among all the other collectors, whose collections are defective!"

However, concerning what has been narrated about Abu Bakr and Omar compiling the Qur'an, when they asked Abu Bakr to compile it, he said: "How can I do a thing that the Prophet neither did nor commanded me to do?" Bukhārī has narrated this hadith in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

On the other hand, Ali claimed that the Prophet had commanded him to compile it and also that he had commanded Zayd Ibn Thābit, Sa'īd Ibn 'Āṣ, 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Ḥārith Ibn Hishām, and Abdullah Ibn Zubayr to compile it. So the result is that the compilation of the Qur'an was done by these four persons.²³¹

Ali's Priority in Knowledge of Recitation

Among the different kinds of knowledge in which Ali had eminence was the knowledge of recitation of the Qur'an. Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, Ibn Baṭṭah, and Abu Ya'fā have narrated in their books in detail from 'Amash and Abu Bakr Ibn 'Ayyāsh:

Two men recited 30 verses of the *Surat al-Ahqāf*, and there were differences in their recitations. Ibn Mas'ūd said: "But I have never recited in such a wrong way." So he took them both to the Prophet. They recited it for the Prophet, but he got very angry. Then, Ali who was in the presence of the Prophet, said:

رسول الله يأمركم أن تقرأوا كما علمتم.

"The Prophet of God commands you to recite the Qur'an as you have been taught." This is a good case to prove that Ali had different knowledge of the recitations. It is narrated that when Zayd read the word *tābūt* for *tābuwat*, Ali told him: "Write it as *tābūt*," and he did as Ali had ordered.

All seven reciters of the Qur'an refer to the recitation of Ali. Now, Ḥamzah and Kasā'ī rely on the recitation of Ali and Ibn Mas'ūd. Therefore, they refer to Ali and agree with Ibn Mas'ūd's book as long as his spelling is correct.

Ibn Mas'ūd has said:

ما رأيت أحداً قرأ من علي بن أبي طالب القرآن.

"I have never seen anyone more expert than Ali in the recitation of the Qur'an."

However, the most important parts of Nāfi', Ibn Kathīr, and Abu 'Amr's recitations are based on the recitation of Ibn 'Abbās, and Ibn 'Abbās has also followed the recitation of Ali.

On the other hand, 'Āṣim has obtained his recitation from Abu 'Abd al-Rahmān Sulamī. Abu 'Abd al-Rahmān said: "I have recited the whole Qur'an in the presence of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib." He said that the best recitation is 'Āṣim's recitation, because he recited the main points of the Qur'an correctly, that is, what the others have joined, he has separated and made manifest.

According to the Kūfian, the number of the verses in the Qur'an are related to be given by Ali, and among the followers, except Ali, there is no one to work on the number of the verses. In each town, the number of the verses was written by some followers.

Ali's Eminence in the Knowledge of Exegesis of the Qur'an

Among the scholars are those with knowledge of exegesis, such as Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās, Ubay Ibn Ka'b, and Zayd Ibn Thābit. All of them accept that Imam Ali was more eminent than they.²³²

It is related in the *Tafsir of Naqqāsh* that Ibn 'Abbās said:

جَلَّ مَا تَلَمْتُ مِنَ التَّفْسِيرِ مِنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ وَإِنْ مَسَّوْدَ أَنْ يَقْرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ أَنْزَلَ عَلَى سَبْعَةِ أَحْرَفٍ، مَا مِثْلُهَا
إِلَّا وَلَهُ ظُهُورٌ وَطَنٌ، وَإِنْ عَلِيٌّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عِلْمُ الظَّاهِرِ وَالْبَاطِنِ.

"I have mostly learned the knowledge of *tafsir* from Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib and Ibn Mas'ūd; and I have gathered that the Qur'an has been sent down in seven different styles, and each of those styles has two aspects: apparent and hidden. Certainly Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib knew both aspects of it."

It is related in the book *al-Faḍā'il al-Akbari* that Sha'bī said:

مَا أَحَدٌ أَعْلَمَ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ بِعَدْنِيَّ اللَّهِ مِنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ.

"After the Prophet of God, no one was more knowledgeable of the Book of God than Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib."

It is related in *Tārikh Balādhuri* and in *Hilyat al-Awliyā*:

قَالَ عَلِيٌّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: وَاللَّهِ مَا تَزَلْتُ آيَةً إِلَّا وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ فِيمَا تَزَلْتُ وَأَيْنَ تَزَلْتُ، أَلَيْلٌ تَزَلْتُ أَوْ نَهَارٌ تَزَلْتُ،
فَيَسْأَلُ أَوْجِلُ؟ إِنْ رَبَّنِي وَهَبَ لِي قَلْبًا عَوَّلًا وَلِسَانًا سَوَّلًا.²³³

"Ali said: 'By God, there remains no verse but I know the meaning of it. I am aware of all the verses revealed in the daytime or at night, or in the deserts or on the mountains. For indeed my Creator has given me a reflective mind and a curious tongue.'"

It is related in *Quwwat al-Qulūb* that Ali said:

لو شئت لأو قرت سبعين بعيراً في تفسير فاتمة الكتاب²³⁴

"If I wanted, I could load 70 camels with commentary on the chapter *al-Fātiḥa al-Kitāb*."

Ever since the exegetes obtained this information on the Imam, they have not referred to anyone for their *Tafsirs* except to him.

When Imam Ali was on the pulpit preaching, Ibn Kawwā' asked him:

What is the meaning of the verse

النَّارِياتِ ذَرَوَا؟

The Imam answered: "It is about the winds." Then he asked:

And what is

الْحَامِلَاتِ وِقْرًا؟

He answered that it is about the clouds. He then asked to know what

الْمَجَارِياتِ يَمْرًا؟

was, and the Imam stated it was about the ships. He asked then:

What about

الْمُقْسِمَاتِ أَمْرًا؟

He answered: "It is about the angels." All the commentators have accepted this meaning and followed his explanation exactly.

All these verses are the beginning of the chapter of

النَّارِياتِ

as:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، وَالنَّارِياتِ ذَرَوَا، وَالْحَامِلَاتِ وِقْرًا، وَالْمَجَارِياتِ يَمْرًا، وَالْمُقْسِمَاتِ أَمْرًا، إِنَّمَا نُوعِنُكَ لَصَاحِقٌ، وَإِنَّ الدِّينَ لَوَاقِعٌ..

By the swift scattering [winds], and by those heavy-rain-carrying [clouds], and by the gently sailings [ships upon the seas], and by those [angels] who distribute [the world's] command, that what is promised is absolutely true! And surely the Doomsday is about to occur! (51:1-6).

'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī has said in his *Tafsir* that the term

النَّارِياتِ

is plural for

النَّارِية

and he gives the example:

ذرت الريح التراب تدروه ذروا

"The wind blew the dust into air and scattered it."

The Arabic word

وفر

with the vowel point *kasrah*, is a sign of quiescence, meaning the heaviness of the load or carrying a baby in the womb. In these verses, swearing after swearing is a kind of emphasis given to something that is sworn. It is a reprisal for what has been done. Therefore,

وَالنَّايَاتِ ذَرَوْا

is a swearing of the wind spreading dust everywhere in the air.

The term

فَلْحَايِلَاتِ وَفَرَا

with the

فَا

as the sign of delay, relates to the wind carrying the clouds.

فَلْحَايِلَاتِ

refers to the swearing for the ships in the seas sailing easily.

فَالْقَسَمَاتِ أَمْرًا

is a reference for swearing for the angels acting on the command of God; they divide the carrying out of that command among them according to its degree and rank. It is because the command of the Lofty God is unique: it is one and the same whether He decides about it, plans it, and creates and puts it into action; there is no difference between deciding it and then putting it into action. So some of the angels of God act upon an affair according to their different duties, and then that affair and command is carried out in different ways. Moreover, as the ranks and positions of some angels who carry the commands are lower than that of some others, the commands are divided among them to suit their tasks. The commands keep being divided among the angels according to their capacities and the importance of fulfilling them. This division of commands proceeds in the same way until the angels lowest in rank and position are entrusted with the less important commands.

So one observes that these four verses refer to the general management in the divine world of creation, because they express the divine planning for the land: *By the swift scattering* [of winds]. And then,

they point to God's other plan for the sea: *and by the gently sailings* [ships upon the seas]. They also point to His plan for the atmosphere by saying: *and by those heavy-rain-carrying* [clouds]. They explain the functions of all the angels and then introduce the angels who act as the dividers of the commands and affairs: *and by those* [angels] *who distribute* [the world's] *command*.

Therefore, that which is stated so far it means: "I swear by all means that all affairs of the divine world are planned and done by them." Concerning the commentary on these four verses by Ali, there are many hadiths from the Shi'a and the Sunni scholars.²³⁵

Ibn Kathīr Damashqī has narrated it in his *Tafsīr* from Shu'ba Ibn Ḥajjāj, from Sammāk and from Khālīd Ibn 'Ar'arah, and also with another chain from Shu'ba, from Qāsim Ibn Abi Bazah, from Abu Ṭufayl, that they heard it from Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib. Apart from these two chains, there is a hadith from Imam Ali that he preached on the pulpit in Kūfa Mosque saying:

لَا تَأْتُونِي عَنْ آيَةٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَلَا عَنْ سُنَّةٍ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ إِلَّا أَنَا نَكُم بِذَلِكَ

"You are not asking me anything about the verses of the Book of God, nor are you asking me about the laws of the Prophet of God unless I inform you of that!"

Ibn Kawwā' stood up in his presence and asked:

O Master of the faithful, what is the meaning of this statement

وَالنَّارَاتِ ذُرُوءًا

of God?

Ali said: "It is the wind." He asked:

Then, what is the meaning of:

وَالسَّحَابَاتِ وَفُرُوجًا

Ali answered: "It is the clouds." He asked to know what

وَالْمَجَارِيَاتِ يُسْرًا

was. Ali said it meant the ships. His last question was what the

وَالْمَقْسَمَاتِ أَمْرًا

was, and Ali said it was the angels.²³⁶

In *Tafsir al-Dürr al-Manthür*, Suyūṭī has given a commentary on those four verses by Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, from ‘Abd al-Razzāq Faryābī, Sa‘īd Ibn Manṣūr, Ḥārith Ibn Abi Usāmah, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Mundhar, Ibn Abi Ḥātam, Ibn Anbārī in *Masāḥif*, Ḥākim with the corrections that he has made, and Bayhaqī in *Sha‘b al-Imān*, from the different chains he has found.²³⁷

The Story of Ṣubaygh Ibn ‘Asal and Omar on This Verse

Suyūṭī and Ibn Kathīr have quoted Bazzār and Dār Qutnī in *Ḥifẓ al-Ḥadīth*, and Ibn Mardawayh and Ibn ‘Asākir from Sa‘īd Ibn Musayyib, as saying that: Ṣubaygh Tamīmī went to Omar and asked him:

Tell me what is the meaning of

النَّارِياتِ ذُرُوءًا

Omar said: "It means 'the winds'; if I had not heard it from the Prophet, I would not have told you that."

Ṣubaygh said:

Now let me know what the meaning of

فَالْعَمَلَاتِ وَفَرًا

is.

Omar answered: "It is about the clouds; if I had not heard it from the Prophet, I would not have told you that." Then Ṣubaygh said:

Inform us about the verse

فَالْجَارِيَاتِ يُسْرًا

Omar answered: "It means the ships, if I had not heard it from the Prophet, I would not have told you that." Once again Ṣubaygh said:

Let me know the meaning of

فَالْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنْزَلًا

Omar said that it is about the angels, and if he had not heard it from the Prophet, he would not tell him that.

At that moment Omar ordered Ṣubaygh to be given a hundred lashes and then jailed in a single room. Later on, when he was healed from the injury of the lashes, Omar gave him a hundred more lashes. Then he made him mount a camel and sent him to Basra, and in the meantime, he wrote a letter to his governor, Abu Mūsā Ash‘arī, in

Basra, telling him not to let people contact him. In such an abject condition, Şubaygh was delivered to Abu Mūsā in Basra, and there he swore in the presence of Abu Mūsā that he regretted his actions and would not ask such questions any more. Abu Mūsā reported his case to Omar, and Omar said: "I gather that he is right, so let him be free and contact people."²³⁸

Further, Suyūṭī, quoting Faryābī and Hasan, said that Şubaygh Ibn ʿAsal Tamīmī asked Omar al-Khaṭṭāb to tell him the meaning of

وَالنَّارِيَاتِ ذُرُوءًا، المرسلات عرفاً

and

التازعات عرفاً.

But in response to his question, Omar told him: "Uncover your head!" When he took off his head-cover, Omar noticed his two braids of hair and said: "By God, if I had seen you had shaven your head, I would have cut off your head!" After that, Abu Mūsā Ashʿarī announced that no one should contact him and to make conversation with him.²³⁹

This is the case of Şubaygh's questioning Omar, his being beaten with the date-twigs and sticks and being injured, and then being sent to prison. Ibn Kathīr, in the story we have just explained, has said that Ibn ʿAsākir has narrated this hadith in detail about the condition of Şubaygh.

ʿAllāmah Amīnī in *al-Ghadīr* in the chapter *nawādir al-athar fi-ʿilm al-Omar*, under the question concerning the difficulties concerning the Holy Qurʾān, has narrated from *Sunan Dārimī*, *Tārikh* of Ibn ʿAsākir, *Sirat al-Omar* of Ibn Juzī, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, *Itqān* of Suyūṭī, *Kanz al-Unimāl*, which narrates from Dārimī and Naṣr Muqaddas Isfahani, and al-Kalāʾī, Ibn Anbārī, and Ibn ʿAsākir from *Tafsīr al-Durr al-Manthūr*, and *Fath al-Bārī* and *Futūḥāt al-Islamiyyah*, which are narrated by Sulaymān Ibn Yasār:

A man who was called Şubaygh entered Medina and from the moment of his arrival, he began questioning people about the verses of the Qurʾān expressed in a metaphorical manner. Omar, who had already prepared some *ʿarājins*²⁴⁰ (palm twigs), sent someone to fetch him. When he was presented to Omar, he asked him: "Who are you?" He answered that he was Abdullah Şubaygh. Omar took a twig and started beating him on the head, and in the meantime, he repeated: "I am Abdullah Şubaygh!" Omar struck him on the head so much that it started bleeding. Şubaygh said: "O Commander of the Faithful, it is enough. I have lost whatever hair I had on my head; it is now bare and as you see is bleeding.

There is a hadith from Nāfi^c, the servant of Abdullah, saying:

The Iraqi Ṣubaygh began asking the Muslim armies a great many different questions until he arrived in Egypt. ‘Amr Ibn ‘Āṣ sent him to Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. When ‘Amr Ibn ‘Āṣ’s man handed Omar the letter, Omar read the letter and then asked the man where that man with him was. The guard said: “He is now in his dwelling place.” Omar commanded him to keep an eye on him so that he did not go anywhere or he would punish him. So the man immediately went to his living place and fetched the man and brought him into Omar’s presence.

Omar asked him: “What! Are you questioning the people about something odd?” Then Omar sent his men to bring some twigs of palm trees and began beating him so much that his spine almost broke, and he began bleeding; then he left him alone for a while until his injuries healed. Some time later, he again beat him and caused the same injuries to his shoulders and body, and left him in that state until he got better. The third time he decided to punish him, Ṣubaygh told him: “If you really want to kill me, do it; I am pleased with that. But if you want to cure my injuries after beating me, I do not need your treatment!”

Then Omar let him go to his dwelling place, and in the meantime, wrote a letter to Abu Mūsā Ash‘arī saying that he should not let anyone contact him. This was too much for the man. Then Abu Mūsā wrote to Omar that the man had repented, so Omar commanded Abu Mūsā to let him do what he wanted to.

It is narrated from Sā’ib Ibn Yazīd:

Some people went to Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb saying: “O Commander of the Faithful, we came across a man who was asking about some issues in the Qur’an.” Omar implored: “O God! Give me domination over him.” Then one day when Omar was sitting at home with some guests, all of a sudden, that man entered the room wearing a robe and a Ṣifdī turban on his head. He too sat down for breakfast. After breakfast, he said:

O Commander of the Believers, what is the meaning of

وَالنَّاسُ يَفْرَوْنَ أَهْلَ مَلَايِكَةٍ وَقَرَأَ؟

Omar asked: “Are you the same man?” He [i.e. Omar] stood up, went closer to the man, rolled up his sleeves, and gave him so many lashes that his turban fell off, and he said: “By God, Who has my soul in His control, if I had found you shaving your head, I would have killed you.” He then turned to his men and said: “Now let him mount his camel, and

then let him leave this town for his hometown. When he arrives at his town, a preacher must announce to the people that Ṣubaygh was seeking knowledge and has made a big mistake."

Ṣubaygh, who had been an honorable man among his tribe in the past, became lowly and miserable and died in that condition.

It is narrated from Anas that once Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb gave Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb Kūfī so many lashes that blood was running down his back, and he was turning from side to side in pain.

Zuhri has narrated that Omar gave so many lashes to Ṣubaygh for his constant questioning about the [meaning of the] Qur'an that he became disabled!

Ghazzālī, in *Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm*, vol. 1, p. 3, states:

It was Omar who stopped disputation and discussion [about the Qur'an]. Once he beat Ṣubaygh so hard with twigs for asking two questions about the Book of God that Omar humiliated him and made people keep away from him.

This Ṣubaygh was the very same Ṣubaygh Ibn 'Asal. It is said his correct name was Ibn 'Asil. It is also said that Ṣubaygh Ibn Sharik was from the tribe of Banū 'Asil.²⁴¹

In any case, Sunni scholars have confirmed that as Ṣubaygh kept asking about the meaning of ambiguities in the Qur'an, he was banned from questioning, and then he was punished and was exiled from his hometown.

Suyūṭī, in *Itqān*, in the section titled "Avoiding Questioning the Ambiguities of the Qur'an," has mentioned two hadiths on this subject about Ṣubaygh. The first one is the hadith of Dārimī from Sulaymān Ibn Yasār, whom we discussed in this section. The second hadith is from Nāfi', the slave of Abdullah, whom we mentioned in the final part of the same hadith. He has given it the title *wa fi rawāyatin*.²⁴²

Ibn Kathīr, after mentioning Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib, whom we are mentioning right now, says:

The story of Ṣubaygh Ibn 'Asal and Omar is very famous:

إِنَّهُ ظَهَرَ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ فَيَا بَلَّ تَمْتَا وَعَنَادَا. وَاللَّهِ أَعْلَمُ.²⁴³

Because of his questioning, it appeared that Ṣubaygh was taunting [Omar] and asking the questions with bad intention, but God is all-knowing about his intention!

Omar prohibited [people] from asking anything about the meaning of the Qur'an, and he said: "People must recite only the outward aspect of the Qur'an." He also banned people from mentioning the customs and hadiths of the Prophet. He commanded his governors everywhere in the country to tell people not to mention any hadith of the Prophet. That is why he punished anyone who disobeyed him. His whip was powerful, and he was so quick to lash people that no one dared to ask him anything against his will. It was because of his whip that he could not distinguish enemy from friend, nor could he distinguish the head from the bottom, or the neck from the body! As soon as a poor questioner asked him a question, he would beat him to death.

Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, in *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* states:

درة عمر أهدب من سيف الحجاج.²⁴⁴

"The whip of Omar was more awful than the sharp sword of Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf Thaqafī!"

We learn that for a long time, Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās wanted to ask Omar the meaning of this verse:

ان تو الى الله قد صفت قلوبكما.

If you [two women] turn to God [it is for your benefit,] for your hearts are so inclined, but he dared not ask, until one time they were traveling together, and on the way Abdullah prepared some water and presented it to Omar to perform the ablution in preparation for the prayer. So he availed himself of the chance to ask Omar:

O Commander of the Faithful, who is meant by these two women in this verse?

ان تو الى الله

Ibn 'Abbās says that Omar delayed answering his question for a few seconds. It was as if he did not like the question. At last he raised his head, saying: "They were Ḥafṣah and 'Āyisha."²⁴⁵

In the matter of 'Awl we also understood that when Ibn 'Abbās revealed the matter to Zufar and made it clear that 'Awl was wrong, Zufar told him: "Why did you not reveal this question at the time of Omar?" Ibn 'Abbās answered Zufar: "I was frightened to reveal this matter; I was afraid that it might be against the will of Omar."

In any case, it took a hundred years to explain the source of the hadiths of the Prophet of God. During this period of time, it was forbidden to narrate any hadith. Now, why was this so? That is clearly

understood from the above explanation, and the Muslims suffered a great loss as a consequence.

The Qur'an is for reciting, for reflecting on its verses, and for understanding its meaning. There are many verses in the Qur'an that invite us to think about and reflect on their meaning. Those verses caution us to beware of reciting the Qur'an without understanding their meaning! If one does not know the meaning of the Qur'an, and one is not allowed to ask questions concerning it, then what is the use of this Book? This is a Book of practice, and practice without knowledge is impossible. How can one act upon the commands of the Qur'an without understanding its real meaning?! There are many verses expressed in metaphorical ways in the Qur'an, and all of them are sent down for the use and benefit of the people. There is not a useless or false word in the Qur'an. However, one must refer to the clear verses in order to grasp the real meaning of the verses that are expressed in metaphorical ways. In order to do this successfully, those firmly rooted in knowledge have been appointed by the Great Divine Legislator. They know the exact meanings of the verses expressed in metaphorical ways, and by referring to the decisive verses, they make the meanings clear for the people. If God wanted to keep the secret of the verses expressed in metaphorical ways to Himself, and not let those firmly rooted in knowledge know the meaning of them, then who could understand what the Qur'an's true messages are?

Every individual has his own talent, capacity, and character for knowing. However, the question is why Omar took the position of the caliphate, government, and center of revelation, if he was ignorant of the meaning of the Qur'an and unable to answer the people's questions! Instead of Omar's answering the people in the right way as the Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, answered them—Ali, who was knowledgeable of the secrets of the Qur'an, and who always told the people: "Ask me anything you wish to know"—Omar said to people: "Shut up!" and gave them lashes for questioning instead of the right answers!

Omar did not know the meaning of

والنَّارَاتِ فَرَوَاهُ لِحَامِلَاتٍ وَفَرَا

and was ashamed, dumbfounded at the question of Şubaygh about it, so instead of answering him he gave him lashes. It is not given in a single hadith according to which Omar said that the meaning of

والنَّارَاتِ

is the winds, and that

means the clouds.

Ibn Kathīr, when explaining this event, makes it clear that this hadith is inauthentic, and apart from the narrators, Abu Bakr Bazzāz has said that Abu Bakr Abi Subara is weak, and so is Saʿīd Ibn Salām of the companions of the hadiths in which it says "The Prophet did not say anything about the meaning of this verse; so do I say, therefore, this hadith is very weak and unreliable."²⁴⁶

The meaning of the Qurʾān is known to the vicegerent [of the Prophet], the one who wrapped up the Book with a piece of cloth, took it to the mosque, and told the people there: "The Prophet has stated: 'I am leaving with you the Book of God and my Household.' Now this is the Book of God, and I am of the Household of the Prophet." Omar stood up and said: "If the Book of God is with you, so it is with us; therefore, we do not need you as the second one (the Book of God and you)." Imam Ali took the Book with him while saying: "You will never see it again until the Day of Judgement."

It must be known that the Qurʾān that is recited now is exactly the same Qurʾān that Ali had with him, and not a letter has been added to it or taken away. The one with the Imam had some special characteristics. First of all, the chapters and verses of his copy of the Qurʾān were collected in order, and second, the positions of the revealing were quite clear, and the letters were dotted so one would not recite it incorrectly. But the other copies did not have dots—vowel points—and dots were added to it at the time of Hajj Ibn Yūsuf Thaqaḥī.

The Qurʾānic verses have exterior and interior meanings. They also include ambiguous verses, so the people need teachers to teach the inner meanings and to express metaphorical aspects of the verses. The teachers are the Household, as the Hadith Thaqaḥayn says.

Shiʿa and Sunni scholars have constantly narrated from the Holy Prophet of God that he stated:

إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ الثَّلاثِينَ: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَعِمْرَتِي—أَوْ أَهْلَ بَيْتِي—وَالْهَمْلَانِ بِفَرْقَةٍ خُشْيَ بِرَدِّهَا عَلَى الْخَوْضِ.²⁴⁷

"I have left two weighty things among you. One is the Book God, the most exalted, which is like a long rope connecting the earth to the sky; and the next one is my Household. They will not separate from each other until they come to me by Kawthar [river in Paradise]."

ʿAllāmah Mīr Ḥāmid Husayn Laknahwī Hindī Nishapuri has dedicated the twelfth volume of his noble book, *ʿAbaqāt al-Anwār*, to this hadith, and he has divided it into two parts: the first part is from

the chains of narrators, and the second part is the discussion about the content.

In any case, it is the Imam who is the guardian of the Qur'an, the preserver of the decisive verses and the verses expressed in metaphorical language, the knower of the absolute and the restricted, the abrogative and abrogated verses. It is he who on the pulpit, and in front of thousands of people, answered questioners like that of Ibn Kawwā'. It is he who furnished the basis for discussions with the Jews and the Christians and made them embrace Islam. His logic was his arguments, given with smiling lips, which attracted friends and repelled enemies.

People should have referred to him and taken refuge in his warm and affectionate arms, and asked him to solve their problems with no anxiety. As the companions and followers of Imam Ali did, Şubaygh should have consulted him on his religious problems, and received sufficient guidance for his other problems. He made a big mistake by consulting others, so instead of getting answers to his questions, he was tortured and beaten to death!

Also, Omar wrote about this encounter with Abu Mūsā Ash'arī, saying: "Şubaygh sought knowledge, and he made a big mistake." However, Şubaygh searched for knowledge, but he did not know the right person to consult! He did not know how to find the knowledge he sought. He did not know whether to go to different teachers with his questions or to consult Imam Ali. The second caliph was manily supported by Mughayrah Ibn Shu'ba and was asked to be the caliph. Is it this person who deserved to be the Imam, or was it Ali, whom the noble Prophet called the bravest lion, and whom on the Day of Ghadīr al-Khumm he ordered the people to call Imam, and whom, when they greeted him, they called the Master of the Faithful?

Omar and Abu Bakr did the same. When they greeted him, both said:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، تَخْرُجُ لَكَ يَا عَلِي، أَصْبَحْتَ وَأَمْسَيْتَ مَوْلَايَ وَمَوْلَى كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ وَمُؤْمِنَةٍ

"Peace be upon you, O Master of the Faithful, well-done! Bravo, Ali, you passed through the night and day and at last became my Master and the Master of every man and woman."

Here, it becomes quite clear to us that in the sermons of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Imam Ali's inviting people to join him but not going after any unknown people was quite right. He let people know that the secret knowledge was with him and that he was the source of knowing; and he also warned them of the meaninglessness of this world

and alerted them that they were all travelers passing through this world.

In any case, we know what Ibn Shahr Āshūb says about the eminence of Ali's knowledge. He explains the meaning of God's statement:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ ²⁴⁸.

Indeed the first House was assigned for the people [is the blessed House appointed in Mecca]. However, they did not know that. A man said: "It means the first house that existed there."

قُلْ: لَا، قَدْ كُنَ قَبْلَهُ بَيْتٌ وَلَكِنَّهُ أَوَّلُ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ مِمَّا رَكَّاهِ الْهَدَى وَالرَّحْمَةُ وَالْبَرَكَةُ وَأَوَّلُ مَنْ بَنَاهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ، ثُمَّ بَنَاهُ قَوْمٌ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ مِنْ جُرْهُمُ، ثُمَّ هَدِمَ قَبْضَةُ قُرَيْشٍ.

Ali said: "No, there used to be houses before the Ka'ba; however, the Ka'ba is a blissful House where people can be guided and enjoy receiving blessings. The first man who built the Ka'ba was Ibrahim, and then after Ibrahim, there were some Arabs in the tribe of Jurhom who rebuilt it. Then it was ruined and the Quraysh tribe renovated it."

Now, in the commentaries on the Qur'an, scholars consider Ibn 'Abbās to be most reliable, because he gathered his knowledge from Imam Ali. Ahmad, in his *Musnad*, has said that when the Prophet passed away, Ibn 'Abbās was a ten-year-old boy who had learned only the decisive verses in the Qur'an. That means whatever he learned was from Imam Ali after the demise of the Prophet.

Ṣāhib Ibn 'Abbād says:

فَلَمْ يَمَثَلْ عَلَيْكَ نُورٌ زُؤَانٌ وَهَوَاٌ وَقَدْ هَدَيْتَ كَمَا اخْتَبَتْ هُدًى.

"Is there anything like your knowledge to guide and help us, the same knowledge that, if they had any weakness in understanding you, would enlighten them right away as clearly as the sun!"²⁴⁹

The Eminence of Ali in Jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*)

Among the branches of knowledge is jurisprudence, and many scholars have grown in Islam from these facts. Imam Ali was the best of the scholars, because what has issued forth from him has not been seen in any of the other scholars. In addition, we see that jurisprudents from all over the Muslim world refer to him for answers to their questions, and each receives knowledge according to his capacity. However, the jurisprudents of the people of Kūfa were Sufyān Thūrī, Ḥassān Ibn Ṣāliḥ Ibn Ḥay, Sharīk Ibn Abdullah, and Ibn Abi Laylā. These jurisprudents, who take their questions from the original one,

say: "This deduction is of the sayings of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib." They set up their jurisprudence on this basis.

The jurists of Basra were Hasan and Ibn Sirīn. Both of them had attained their knowledge from one who received his knowledge from Imam Ali. Ibn Sirīn makes it clear that he obtained his knowledge of jurisprudence from Kūfa and from Ubaydah Sam'āni, who was also the closest person to Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib.

The jurists of Mecca received their knowledge of jurisprudence from Ibn 'Abbās and Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib. It is obvious that Ibn 'Abbās's knowledge came from Imam Ali.

The people of Medina also received their knowledge of jurisprudence from Ali. Shāfi'ī has written a separate book in which he states that all the people in Medina were followers of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib. Muhammad Ibn Hasan Faqih says:

لَوْلَا عَلِيٌّ مِنْ أَبِي طَالِبٍ مَا عَلِمْنَا حُكْمَ أَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ.

"If it were not for Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, we would not have known how to deal with the insurgents and the people who were in revolt!" (That is, not to capture them, and not to kill their wounded or loot their properties.)

Muhammad Ibn Hasan Kitābī has written a book of jurisprudence that includes three hundred points about fighting with people who are in revolt. He has written the points by the direct command of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib.

It is in *Musnad* of Abu Ḥanīfa that Hishām Ibn Ḥakam says that Imam Ṣādiq said to Abu Ḥanīfa: "From where you are analogizing?" He said: "From the statement of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib and Zayd Ibn Thābit." When Omar met with Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib and Zayd Ibn Thābit about his brothers' inheritance from their grandfather, Ali told him:

لَوْ أَنَّ شَجَرَةً انْتَبَهَتْ مِنْهَا غُصْنٌ وَانْتَبَهَتْ مِنَ الْغُصْنِ غُصْنَانِ أَيْمَا أَقْرَبَ إِلَى أَحَدِ الْغُصْنَيْنِ: أَصَابَهُ الدِّيُّ
يُخْرِجُ مِمَّا أَمَّ الشَّجَرَةَ

"If you suppose there is a tree and a branch has grown on it, and then from that growing branch another one is produced, then which of the branches would you take to be closer to the trunk? Will you take the branch growing right from the trunk or the one that has grown from the first branch?"

Zayd Ibn Thābit answered:

لَوْ أَنَّ جَنْدًا انْتَبَهَتْ فِيهِ سَالِقَةٌ فَانْتَبَهَتْ مِنَ السَّالِقَةِ سَالِقَتَانِ أَيْمَا أَقْرَبَ: أَحَدُ السَّالِقَتَيْنِ إِلَى صَاحِبِهَا أَمْ
الْجَنْدِ؟

"If we imagine a river and then a stream runs out from it, and then two other streams are formed from the first one, then which of the streams is closer to the main river? Is it the stream separated from the river, or the stream formed by the first stream?"²⁵⁰ Here we see that Imam Ali and Zayd Ibn Thābit wanted to produce a reasonable excuse for him, because the shares of an inheritance are allocated according to each relative's closeness to the deceased person. Therefore, when one dies who has no children, father, or mother, but who has brothers and a grandfather, his estate must not be given only to the grandfather—the brothers also have their shares. The dead man's brother is closer to him than his grandfather is. If we give a share of the inheritance to his grandfather, we have to give to his brothers the same share as well; that is, the inheritance is for both, and not only for the grandfather. Omar also accepted their opinion, and from then on he divided the inheritance between the grandfather and the brothers. It was the opposite of the opinion of Abu Bakr, who said the inheritance goes to the grandfather only.

Shaykh Tūsī, in the book *Khilāf*, says:

If an inheritor is a sister of the same father and mother, and a brother of a father and grandfather, in that case the property is divided among them according to the share that is decided. In this case, the brother of the father is omitted from receiving the inheritance. The companions have differences of opinion in this case. The opinion of Abu Bakr and his companions is: "The property goes only to the grandfather, and the others are ignored." However, the opinions of Omar and Ibn Mas'ūd are that the inheritance goes to the sister, father, mother, and grandfather, but the paternal brother does not get it.²⁵¹

Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Najafi, in the book *Jawāhir*, says:

There is no difference between the Shi'a and us with regard to the grandfather, or even the great-grandfather, who gets the inheritance along with [the dead man's] brothers. However, some of the Sunni jurists say that the paternal and maternal brothers do not receive a share of the inheritance along with the grandfathers; the inheritance goes only to the grandfather. So our texts are a bit different from theirs.

He continues: "In any case, if someone dies and his grandfather and great-grandfather come together along with the brothers of the deceased, the grandfather receives his share of the inheritance, but the great-grandfather does not, no matter whether they are opponents or allies. Therefore, neither the great-grandfather nor the great-grandmother receives any share in the inheritance."²⁵²

In divine knowledge there is the knowledge of how to take care of an inheritance. Those who are expert in this knowledge are called *farḍiyyūn*, and Imam Ali was the most famous among them.

It is given in Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal's *Faḍā'il* that Abdullah said:

إِنَّ أَعْلَمَ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ بِالْفَرَائِضِ عَلَى بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ

"Indeed, in Medina, the most learned man on the questions of inheritance and its quality and calculation was Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib.

Sha'bi has said:

مَا زِلْتُ أَفْرُضُ مِنْ عَلَى وَلَا أَخْتَبِ مِنْهُ

"I have not seen anyone more expert than Ali [in knowledge] and calculation." Then Sha'bi relates someone's question from when he was on the pulpit delivering a sermon in the mosque. He asked about a dead man who had left behind a wife, his parents, and two daughters. He asked how much his wife's share in the inheritance would be. The Imam answered him promptly: "In that case, her share would be one-eighth instead of one-ninth." This question is known as the question of *minbariyyah*.

There is also the question of *dināriyyah*. Once when the Imam left his home and was about to mount his animal, a woman approached him and said: "My brother has died and has left behind some six hundred *dinars*, but from that amount, they have given me only one *dinar*. Now, I hope you will do me the justice of getting my money back for me." The Imam consulted his astute mind, and after counting the heirs told the women that her share of the inheritance was exactly one *dirham*. Then he mounted the animal and went away.²⁵³

The Eminence of the Imam in the Knowledge of Hadiths

Among the types of knowledge is the knowledge of hadiths. The number of narrators who have directly narrated from the Prophet is about 20, and among them are Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Mas'ūd, Jābir Anṣārī, Abu Ayyūb, Abu Hurayra, Anas, Abu Sa'īd Khudrī, Abu Rāfi', and a few others. Among them was Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, who knew more of the hadiths, and the most correct ones, and who was most reliable in keeping the secrets of the Prophet of God, as it is said: "Ali is on the side of the Truth!" Therefore, he was the most reliable and correct in relating the hadiths.

Tirmidhī and Balādhiri have narrated that:

قِيلَ لِحُذَيْفَةَ: مَا هَذَا أَكْثَرَ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَدِيثًا؟ قَالَ: إِذَا كُنْتُ سَأَلُهُ أَتَانِي، وَ
إِذَا كُنْتُ عَنْهُ ابْتَدَأَنِي.

"Ali was asked: 'How come the number of your hadiths is greater than that of all the companions of the Prophet?' He answered: 'Whenever I asked anything from the Prophet, he answered me on the spot, and when I did not question him, he himself repeated them to me.'"

It is narrated in the book of Mardawayh:

إِنَّهُ قَالَ: كُنْتُ إِذَا سَأَلْتُ أُعْطِيتُ وَإِذَا كُنْتُ عَنْهُ ابْتَدَأَنِي.

"Certainly he said: 'Whenever I asked about [any problem from the Prophet], he honored me with the correct answer, and when I kept silent, he told me [a new subject].'"

Muhammad Iskāfi says:

حَبِيبُ عِلْمٍ بِالنَّبِيِّ هُوَ كُنْتُ وَالَيْهِ فِي عِلْمِ الرِّسَالَةِ يَرْجِعُ 1
أَصْفَاءُ أَحْمَدُ مِنْ خَلْقِ عُلُومِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِنُ مِنَ الْعُلُومِ الْأَنْزَغِ. 2

Ali was a wise, learned one, and so he was aware of events, and they referred to him for the knowledge of the prophetic mission.

Ahmad chose him for his own hidden knowledge, and then allocated his knowledge to him, so Ali was full of knowledge and devoid of ignorance.

The Eminence of Ali Ibn Abi Tālib in Theology and Philosophical Discussion

The Prophet said: "Ali has been trained by the Creator in this nation"; in other words: "Ali was a stable, learned, and trained one among this nation." It is narrated:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَنْ سَأَلَ دَعْوَةَ الْبَيْتِ بِالْحَدِيثِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ عَلَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

"The first one who invited the heretics to the Truth and made them debate and discuss was Ali."

Some infidels discussed with him the so-called contradictions in the Qur'an, and he answered the question of Jāthiliq so eloquently that he embraced Islam.

In his book, Abu Bakr Mardawayh narrates from Sufyān, saying: "Ali did not hold discussions with anyone without over-powering him."

When Ra's al-Jālūt (the most learned man of the Jews) told him: "You did not wait for 30 years after the demise of your Prophet before some of you fought with some others and injured them on the face!" Imam Ali answered:

وَأَنْتُمْ زُرْتُمْ أَقْدَانَكُمْ مِنْ مَاءِ الْبَحْرِ حَتَّى قُلْتُمْ لِمُوسَى: اجْعَلْ لَنَا إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ²⁵⁴

"And hardly had you crossed the sea, while your feet were still wet, that you asked Moses: 'Set up a god for us similar to the god that this folk has.'"

After being freed by the Battle of Jamāl, the people of Basra sent Kulayb Jaramī to the Imam to solve his problems and release him from his doubts.

The Imam mentioned whatever was right for him and then told him: "Now swear allegiance." Kulayb said: "I am a messenger for a group, so I should not do anything on my own without informing them."

Imam Ali told him:

أَرَأَيْتَ لَوْ أَنَّ الَّذِينَ وَدَّاعَ بَشُوكَ زَائِدًا تَجَنَّبَنِي لَمْ مَسَاقِطِ الْغَيْثِ، فَرَجَعْتَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَأَخْبَرْتَهُمْ عَنْ
الْكَلَامِ وَالْمَاءِ؟ قَالَ: فَأَمْنُ إِذَا بَدَأَكَ

Let us suppose that those people of yours, who have sent you here, have done so to investigate this land, to find a pasture suitable for your animals to graze on, and then to let them know so that they can come here to live. So you have spotted such a land and have turned to your people and informed them of such a fruitful land. But if you drink some water and rest for a while here, before informing them, have you done a good job or have you committed a crime? Your being sent here is similar to a shepherd's being sent out to find a pasture for the cattle to graze on, and then when he finds a desirable spot, first he drinks some water to quench his thirst and then informs the others about the place he has spotted.

Then the Imam told him: "Now let me have your hand and swear allegiance to me." Kulayb says: "By God, I did not dare avoid swearing allegiance to Ali in the face of his correct statement!"²⁵⁵

Concerning Imam Ali's philosophical knowledge, there is a statement of the Imam that says: "The first step in knowing God is knowing His Unity, and the first step in knowing His Unity is avoiding attributing anything to Him."²⁵⁶

Whatever the theologians—including Mu'tazilah, Zaydiyyah, Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār Ibn Ahmad, Abu Abdullah al-Husayn al-Baṣarī, Abu Ishāq 'Abbās, Abu Hāshim Jubā'ī, his father, Abu Ali, Abu

Ya'qūb Shāḥḥām, and Abu Hudhayl 'Allāf—have said about this profound philosophical statement is not superior to it.

Warrāq Qumī says:

عَلَىٰ لِمَنَّا النَّاسُ قَدْ بَيَّنَّ الَّذِي هُمْ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَلَكُم يَتَوَجَّم
عَلَىٰ أَعْلَىٰ الدِّينِ وَفَاءَهُ حَقُّهُ وَلَوْلَا مَا أَضَىٰ إِلَىٰ غُفْرَانِهِمْ 1

1. It was Ali who cleared up matters about which the people had different opinions, and he was not afraid of declaring his word
2. It was Ali who gave a good form to the religion of God; if it were not Ali, there would not remain even one-tenth of a *dirham*'s share [of the religion of God].

The Priority of Imam Ali in Literature and the Rules of Linguistics

Among the kinds knowledge are rules of linguistics. There are many scholars in this field, and among them all, Ali is the founder of this branch of knowledge. All the scholars in this branch of knowledge learned it from Khalīl Ibn Ahmad Ibn 'Īsā Ibn 'Amr Thaqafī, and he learned it from Abdullah Ibn Ishāq Ḥaḍramī, and he from Abu 'Amr Ibn 'Alā, he from Maymūn Afran, he from 'Anbasat al-Fil, he from Abu al-Aswad Duwalī, and finally he from Imam Ali.

The reason for establishing the knowledge of grammar was that the Quraysh used to marry the girls from the tribe of Anbāṭ²⁵⁷ and they found that their newborn children had lost their original language and accent. This went on until the daughter of Khuwaylid Asadī married a man from the tribe of Anbāṭ who said:

إِنِّي أَبُي مَاتَ وَتَرَكَ عَلَىٰ مَالًا كَثِيرًا

"My parents died and left behind great wealth for me." Of course this kind of sentence is wrong; it would better to say:

إِنِّي أَبُي مَاتَ وَتَرَكَ لِي مَالًا كَثِيرًا

"My father has died and left behind great wealth for me." It would be even better to say:

إِنِّي أَبُي مَاتَ وَتَرَكَ لِي (عَلَىٰ) مَالًا كَثِيرًا

It has been narrated that an Arab heard a businessman reciting:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الشِّرْكِ كَيْفَ وَرَسُولُهُ

"God is weary of the idolaters and His Messenger," so he attacked him, injuring him on the head. For his claim against him, the businessman took him to Ali Ibn Abi Tālib. The Imam asked the Arab about his insult. The Arab said: "This man has become an idolater on account of his erroneous recitation." The Imam stated: "But his recitation as such was not intentional!"²⁵⁸

It is narrated that Abu al-Aswad's eyes were weak, and he had a daughter who always directed him around. Once, when she was leading her father to Ali Ibn Abi Tālib, she told him:

يَا أَبَتَاهُ، مَا أَقْدَرُ الزَّمَانُ.

which is wrong; the right sentence is

يَا أَبَتَاهُ، الزَّمَانُ مَا أَقْدَرُ.

Or she might say:

مَا أَقْدَرُ الزَّمَانُ.

The last two both mean: "O dear father, how hot the sand is!" In any case, her father told her to avoid saying this, and when they were in the presence of Ali Ibn Abi Tālib, he asked the Imam the correct sentence, for since then Ali had established rules for correct grammar and pronunciation.

It is also narrated that once Abu al-Aswad was going to a funeral service. On the way, a man asked him

مَنْ الْقَتِيلُ؟

that is: "Who is the killer?" But he meant to ask: "Who is the dead person?" Abu al-Aswad told him: "The killer is God!" Later, Abu al-Aswad informed Imam Ali of his conversation with the man, and the Imam established a rule for correct grammar.

Then Imam Ali wrote the correct rule for the grammar and pronunciation and gave it to Abu al-Aswad, telling him:

مَا أَحْسَنَ هَذَا النَّحْوِ أَحْسَنَ لَهُ بِالسَّائِلِ، فَتَمَى نَحْوًا.

"How good is this way [of writing] that you use and follow"; so it was called "grammar."²⁵⁹

Ibn Salām says:

In that letter, the Imam wrote:

الْكَلَامُ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْيَاءَ، اسْمٌ وَفِعْلٌ وَحَرْفٌ جَاءَ لِمَعْنَى. فَالِاسْمُ مَا تَأْتَا عَنْ الْمَعْنَى، وَالْفِعْلُ مَا تَأْتَا عَنْ حَرَكَةِ الْمَعْنَى، وَالْحَرْفُ مَا أَوْجَدَ مَعْنَى فِي غَيْرِهِ

"A sentence is composed of three things, noun, verb, and preposition, that all together make a sense. A noun is that which refers to the subject, a verb is that which represents an action, and the meaning of a preposition relies on those [noun and verb]."

After writing these sentences, the Imam ended with his signature: "Ali Ibn 'Abu' Ṭālib wrote these parts."

Grammarians are surprised that he signed his name as "Abu" Ṭālib, whereas he should have written "Abi" Ṭālib! Some people have said: "the Imam 'Abu' Ṭālib is the same as the Imam 'Abi' Ṭālib, which was his nickname." Some have said: "It is as Zamakhsharī has said in his book *Fa'iq*, that since the Imam was always known as 'Abu' Ṭālib among the people, he signed his letter with the spelling 'Abu,' not 'Abi.'"

The Eminence of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib in Giving Sermons

And among the sciences is the knowledge of how to lecture and give sermons. Imam Ali was the best of the orators.²⁶⁰ Have you not considered that the sermons of the Imam, like the sermons of Tawhid, Shiqshiqiyyah, Hidāyat, Malāḥim, Lu'lu' Gharrah, Qāsīyah, Ifṭikhār, Ashbāh, Durrah Yatīmah, Aqālim, Wasilah, Ṭalutīyyah, Qaṣbiyyah, Nakhliyyah, Salmānīyyah, Nāṭiqīyyah, Dāmighah, and Fāḍiḥa, are narrated in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, collected and edited by Sharīf Raḍī, and in the book of the sermons of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib from Ismā'īl Ibn Mihrān Sakūnī²⁶¹ and also Zayd Ibn Wahab?

Ḥimyarī states:

- مَنْ كَانَ أَعْطَاهُمْ وَأَنْطَقَهُمْ وَمَنْ قَدْ كَانَ يَشْفِي حَوَالَةَ الْبَرَاءِ 1
مَنْ كَانَ أَنْزَعَهُمْ مِنَ الْإِشْرَاقِ أَوْ لِلَّيْلِ كَانَ الْبَطْنُ مِنْهُ خَفَاءَ 2
مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي أَمْرُوا إِذَا ائْتَلَفُوا بِأَنْ يَرْضَوْا بِهِ فِي أَمْرِهِمْ قَضَاءَ 3
مَنْ قِيلَ لَوْلَاهُ وَلَوْلَاتِ عِلْمُهُ هَلَكُوا وَعَالُوا بِهِنَّ صَمَاءَ 4²⁶²

1. He is the best orator among them, and so is he the presenter, and he is the healer of the irremediable patients around him.
2. It is he who separates their souls from blasphemy with the knowledge he is occupied with (he is full of knowledge),
3. He is the one who reconciles people's disputes, for they know that he is the only judge to solve their disputes,
4. It is he about whom it is said: "If not for him and if not for his knowledge, people would perish; they would plunge into seditions!"

Imam Ali's Eminence in Eloquence and Rhetoric

Among the branches of knowledge is eloquence and rhetoric. Imam Ali was very much versed in these two subjects. Sayyid Raḍī has said: "Ali was the chief source for this knowledge; he really had mastery in eloquence and rhetoric. The founder of this knowledge was indeed Ali, and so was he reference to it."

Jāhīz says in his book *al-Ghurrah*: "Ali wrote to Mu'āwiyah: 'Your selfishness and tyrannical attitude have deceit in them that will lead you to degradation. So be afraid of your ugly behavior; perchance you may save your life.'"²⁶³

The Master of the Faithful stated: "He who believes [in God] is surely protected from all calamities!"

Kalbī from Abu Ṣāliḥ and Abu Ja'far by means of his chain [of narrators] from Imam Riḍā has narrated from his great-grandfathers:

The companions of the Prophet of God had gathered in a certain place. They were talking together, and they came to the conclusion that among the letters of the alphabet, the letter *alif* was the most useful one and was used more than the other letters in the alphabet. Right then, Imam Ali started reading his famous sermon for them with no *alif* in it. It is as follows:

حَدَّثَ مَنْ عَظُمَتْ مِثْلُهُ، وَسَبَّحَتْ نَفْسُهُ، وَسَبَّحَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ، وَنَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُهُ، وَتَقَدَّسَتْ مَجِيدَتُهُ، وَ
هَلَكَتْ قَبْرِيَّتُهُ²⁶⁴

"I praise the One Whose praise is great, His blessing is wholesome, His Mercifulness precedes everything, and His word is complete, His will and determination is strong, and the command and judgment are by Him....!"

Soon after reading this elegy, he started another one without dots, which begins with:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ أَفْلَ الْحَمْدِ وَمَأْوَاهُ، وَلَهُ أَوْكَدُ الْحَمْدِ وَأَخْلَاهُ، وَأَسْرَعُ الْحَمْدِ وَأَسْرَاهُ، وَأَظْهَرُ الْحَمْدِ
أَنْهَاهُ، وَأَكْرَمُ الْحَمْدِ وَأَوْلَاهُ²⁶⁵

"All praise belongs to God. He deserves praise, and He is the source to be paid tribute to; and for Him is the most emphatic praise, and all kinds of praises: the most lovable, the swift, the purest, and the loftiest praise! The greatest and honorable praises are of His own!

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says: "I have given these two sermons in my book *Makhzūn al-Maknūn*."

Among the statements of Imam Ali is:

تَحْفُوا تَلْعُوا، فَإِنَّمَا يَبْقَىٰ لَكُمْ أَمِيرٌ وَكَرَّ 266

"Be without burden, be free from cares, so that you can reach the caravan! It is because the first ones keep you waiting, for the next ones to join them!"

The following is also one of the statements of the Imam:

مَنْ بَرِضَ بَدَنًا عَنْ حَشِيمٍ تَرَىٰ تَابِعُضَ عَنْهُمْ يَدٌ وَاحِدَةً وَتَقْبِضُ مِنْهُمْ عَنْهُ أَيْدٍ كَثِيرَةً

"Whoever forsakes his relatives and tribes and only brings one sect of them together, he has cut his connection with many others!"

Another of the statements of the Imam is: "One who behaves calmly with his relatives and tribes, he will always feel their affection towards him."

Another statement is: "One who is ignorant of something hates it!" (That is because a person is the enemy of his ignorance.) "So often a man rejects something and considers it a lie when he is ignorant of it."

Another statement is:

الرَّءُ حُجْوَةٌ تَحْتُ لِسَانِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا تَكْمُلُ عَقْلَهُ

"A man is hidden under his tongue; he becomes manifest when he speaks."

Another is:

وَقَرَفَتُهُمْ فِي نَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ

"And you get to know them by their way of speaking." (This statement refers to verse 30, *sūrah* 47, where the Qur'an says:

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَنبَأَكُم فَلَتَرَفَتُهُمْ بِسَمَائِهِمْ وَقَرَفَتُهُمْ فِي نَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ

...Though you certainly know them in the way of twisting of their speech, and God is aware of your [outward and inward] deeds.

And among his statements is

قِيَمَةُ كُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا بَحْنِنَ 267

"Every man's value is known through his knowledge." This saying is similar to the statement of God, as He states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ 268

Indeed God has chosen him above you and has given him great wisdom and status (2:247).

And he states:

الْقَتْلُ يُقِلُّ الْقَتْلَ.

"Killing an aggressive person who has committed a crime reduces crime in the society." This is also similar to God's statement:

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ.²⁶⁹

...and there is life for you in retaliation (2:179).

The Eminence of Imam Ali in Composing Poems

Jāhiz has mentioned in *al-Bayān wa al-Tabyīn* and in *Faḍā'il Banī Hāshim*, and Balādhirī in *Anṣāb al-Ashrāf*:

إِنَّ عَلِيًّا أَشْرَفُ الصَّاحِبَةِ وَأَفْصَحُهُمْ وَأَخْبَثُهُمْ وَأَكْبَرُهُمْ.

"In fact, Ali was most talented in poetry, the best orator, and the best writer."

Recorded in *Tārikh Balādhirī*, Ali's poems are the best among the poems of Abu Bakr, Omar, and Othman.

The Eminence of Ali in Prosody

Among the different branches of knowledge is the art of prose, which springs from Ali's home. It is narrated that Khalīl Ibn Ahmad learned the rules of this branch of knowledge from a companion of Muhammad Ibn Ali al-Bāqir or Ali Ibn al-Husayn, and then he established the science of prosody.

The Eminence of Imam Ali in Arabic Grammar

Among the branches of knowledge is the study of Arabic literature, from which scholars have greatly benefitted, and first among them all was Imam Ali, who is considered to be the main source of this knowledge.

Ibn Ḥarirī Baṣrī has narrated in his book *Durrat al-Ghawwāṣ*, and Ibn Fayyād in *Sharh al-Akhhbār*, that the companions of the Prophet differed in their understanding of the meaning of the word *maw'ūdat*, and Ali said:

إِنَّمَا لَا تَكُونُ مَوْؤَدَةً حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ عَلَيْهَا الْكَارَاتُ السَّبْعُ.²⁷⁰ قَالَ لَهُ غَيْرُ صَدَقْتَ أَطَالَ اللَّهُ بِكَ.

"In fact, the word *maw'ūdat* cannot be used as *maw'ūdat* until blood has already run, or the seven processes of blood have occurred."

Then Omar said: "You have spoken the truth. May God increase your lifetime!"

The Imam's purpose concerning these processes is the very statement of God:

وَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ

...and We created man of an extraction of clay...²⁷¹ So according to this statement, the Imam said that if a baby is alive at the time of its birth, and then is buried, it is considered to be *maw'ūdat*.

The Eminence of Imam Ali in Speech

Among the kinds of knowledge is the art of lecturing, and many orators fall into this field. So far no one has been equal to Imam Ali in lecturing, using extraordinary sentences and admonitions to guide people to the truth. The following are some of his sayings:

مَنْ زَرَعَ الْعَدُوَانَ حَصَدَ الْخُسْرَانَ

"He who sows the seed of enmity harvests failure and loss!"

مَنْ ذَكَرَ الْمَيِّتَةَ نَسِيَ الْأَمَانَةَ

"He who remembers his death forgets his cravings!"

مَنْ قَصَدَ بِهِ الْقُلُوبَ قَامَ بِهِ الْجَهْلُ

"He whose brain stops reflecting is governed by ignorance."

يَا أَهْلَ الْغُرُوبِ مَا أَتَجَكُم بِذَا غَيْرِ مَا زَيْدٌ، وَشُرُفَاتِيْدُ، وَنَيْمَاتِيْلُوبُ، وَغَيْرِ مَا تَمَكُوبُ، وَ
مُسَالِمَاتِيْمُورُومُ، وَمَالِكِيْمُتُوكُ، وَتُرَاهَاتِيْمُورُوكُ

O you people who are deceived by this world, what is wrong with you that you are so happy with this worthless house [world]? For its loss and evil are close at hand—its blessing has been taken away—the honored and powerful ones have been humiliated, and he who cooperates with it becomes lowly. The one who owns it becomes a captive to someone else. Whatever benefit or inheritance one has from it, perishes soon after.

²⁷¹Abd al-Wāhid Ibn Āmidī has compiled the sayings of the Imam in a book called *Ghurur al-Ḥikam wa Durar Kalim*.²⁷²

The Eminence of Imam Ali in Philosophy and Wisdom

Ali Ibn Abi Tālib is the foremost philosopher and theosopher. For example, when the Holiness was asked about *'ālam al-ʿilwi* (the higher realm), he answered:

صَوْرُ عَلِيٍّ عَنِ الْمَوَادِّ، غَالِيَةٌ عَنِ الْقُوَّةِ وَالْإِسْتِمَادِ، تُجَلَّى لَهَا فَتُفْرَقُ، وَكَأَنَّهَا أَهْلُ الْأَثَرِ، وَأَتَى فِي مُوَجِّعَاتِهَا قَاطِعٌ فِيهَا أَفْئَالَهُ، وَخَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ذَاتَ نَفْسٍ تَلِيقَةٍ إِنْ رَكَّلَهَا بِالْعِلْمِ كَذَخَائِلِهَا فِي جَوَاهِرِ أَوَائِلِ عِلْمِهَا، وَإِذَا اعْتَمَلَ مِنْ رَاجِعِهَا وَكَارَتْ الْأَخْدَادُ كَذَخَائِلِهَا فِيهَا الشَّيْخُ الْفَدَا²⁷³

There are some faces without elemental matter; even their completion is better than their elements. God epiphanized and manifested Himself there, so they shone and brightened, and He looked at them through His light, so they were brightened and illuminated; He created His image in their being, thereby manifesting His acts through them. He created man as a rational soul; if he cultivates his soul by knowledge, then that rationality will resemble the primary Causes [i.e. Intellects]. If he balances his temperament, and distances himself from negative acts and attributes, he will truly resemble and become stable in act, attribute, and deed, associating with the seven heavens.

Ibn Sinā says:

لَمْ يُجَاوِزْ قَلْبُ سَوَاقِطِ الْإِلَهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

"There has not been found a brave man and a philosopher like Ali."

Sayyid Sharif Raḍī says:

مَنْ سَمِعَ كَلَامَهُ لَا يَلِيكَ أَنْهُ مَنْ قَمِعَ فِي كَسْرِيَّتِهِ أَوْ انْقَطَعَ فِي سَفْحِ جَبَلٍ لَا يَسْتَعِجُ الْإِجْتِهَادُ، وَلَا يَرَى إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ وَلَا يَكْذِبُ بَرَقْنَهُ كَلَامُهُ مَنْ يَتَقَشَّسُ فِي الْحَرْبِ، مُصَلِّيًا سَيْفَهُ قِطْعَ الرُّقَبِ وَيَحْمِلُ الْأَهْلَالَ، وَيُؤَدِّيهِ بِنُطْقٍ دَمًا، وَيَقْطُرُ مَهْجًا، وَهُوَ مَعَ ذَلِكَ زَاهِدُ الرُّغَدِ، وَيَتَلَّى الْأَنْبِيَالَ، وَهَذِهِ مِنْ فَضَائِلِهِ الْعَجِيبَةِ وَخَصَائِصِهِ الَّتِي جَمَعَ بِهَا بَيْنَ الْأَخْدَادِ²⁷⁴

Whoever hears this statement will not doubt that this statement is from someone sitting in the corner of a cell without contacting anyone, but remaining alone and pondering. One would never believe that this statement was made by one who was deeply involved in fighting and running battles. He unsheathes his sword and beheads all the champions in the field of the battle—he brings the brave men of war to their knees! And when he turns around, blood falls onto the ground from his sword—that is the blood of the aggressive! In spite of this, he is the most

pious man the world has ever seen. This is a rare eminence of perfection and completion.

Sūsī says:

وَفِي كَفِّهِ سَبَبُ الْمَوْتِ الْوَفَى فَمَنْ عَصَاهُ مَدَّ لَهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ السَّبَبِ 1
 فِي فِيهِ سَيْفٌ حَكَاهُ سَيْفٌ رَاحِيهِ بَيَانِ ذَاكَ وَذَا فِي الْخَطْبِ وَالْخُطْبِ 2
 أَوْ قَالَ لَمْ يَمُتْ لَمْ يَمُتْ مِنْ رَهْبٍ أَوْ قَالَ لِلنَّيْتِ عِشَ تَامَاتِ مِنْ رُغْبٍ 3
 أَوْ قَالَ لِلَّيْلِ كُنْ صُبْحًا لَكَانَ وَلَوْ لِلشَّمْسِ قَالَ أَطْلَعِي بِاللَّيْلِ لَمْ تَنْبِ 4
 أَوْ مَدَّ كَهَا إِلَى الدُّنْيَا لِيُغْلِبَهَا هَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ بِلَاكُهَا وَلَا تَنْبِ 5
 ذَاكَ الْإِمَامُ الَّذِي جِبْرِيلُ خَادِمُهُ إِنْ تَابَ خُطْبُ نَبٍ عَنْهُ وَلَا يَنْبِ 6
 وَعَزَّ زَيْنِيلُ مَطَوَاعُ لَمْ تَفْتَقِ يَقُلْ أَيْمْتُ ذَا بَيْتِ أَوْ هَيْبَةُ لِي يَهَبِ 7
 رِضْوَانُ رَاضٍ بِهِ مَوْلَى وَمَالِكُ تَمْلُوكُ بِطِيعَاتِهِ فِي كُلِّ مُسْتَدَبِ 8

1. In his hand lies the main cause of death, and whoever opposes him, receives that cause.
2. There is a sword in his mouth [his eloquence]; the sword in his hand relates to that sword! These two swords are similar—there is no difference between them, the one by which he lectures, and the other by which he fights.
3. If he commands a living person to die, he will die in fright! And if he orders a dead person to continue living, he will live.
4. And if he says to night: "Be morning," it changes into morning; and if he commands the sun to rise at midnight, it will rise for certain.
5. If he points to the world, saying: "Be overthrown," it is easy for him to do so.
6. He is such an Imam that Gabriel is at his service. If an important event occurs, Gabriel is there to assist him, but not he to him.
7. And 'Izrā'il is under his command. If he commands him to take away someone's soul or let him go, he does so on the spot.
8. Ridwān (the angel of the treasury of Heaven) is satisfied that his master is the Imam, and Mālik (the guard angel of Hell) likes him to be his owner: so these two angels are there to assist him in every affair!

The Eminence of Imam Ali in the Science of Geometry and Mathematics

Ibn Shahr Āshūb narrates the story of two men who, at the time of Omar, were sitting on the road when suddenly they noticed a slave

being dragged by a chain. One of the two men sitting there said: "If this chain weighs such-and-such an amount, then let my wife be divorced," and the other one said the same, but with a different weight. So they took the case to Omar, and Omar said: "Let these two men keep away from their wives!" But Imam Ali was there and explained the method of how to weigh the chain, and then hearing what he said, all were surprised. After that event, he explains the story of a man who had sworn to weigh an elephant, and, in the meantime, he explains the method of weighing used by the Imam.²⁷⁵

Then Ibn Shahr Āshūb says:

وَيَقَالُ وَضَعَ كُلُّكَاءٍ وَعَمِلَ الْخِذَافَ وَأَجْرَى عَلَى الثَّرَائِبِ أَيْامَ صِفِّينَ

"And it is said that at the time of the Battle of Shiffin the Imam invented rafts and rowers to cross the river Euphrates." Rafts are a means of sailing found on the rivers of Iraq, and rowers are what they use to sail the rafts.

The Eminence of Ali in Astrology

Saʿīd Ibn Jubayr says:²⁷⁶

A peasant went to welcome Ali, and according to the hadith of Qays Ibn Saʿīd, his name was Mazjān Ibn Shāshwā (in another copy, it is said to be Markhān Ibn Shāshwā). The man went from Madāʾin to the bridge of Burān to welcome the Imam, and when he saw him, he said:

يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، تَنَاحَسَتِ النُّجُومُ الطَّالِيَاتُ، وَتَنَاحَسَتِ السُّعُودُ بِالْخُوسِ. إِذَا كَانَ مِثْلُ
هَذَا الْيَوْمِ وَجِبَ عَلَى الْحَكِيمِ الْإِغْفَاءُ. وَيَوْمُكَ هَذَا يَوْمٌ صَفَبَ قَدِ اقْتَرَنَ فِيهِ
كُوكَبَانِ، وَأَنْكَسَى فِيهِ الْإِيزَانُ، وَأَنْقَدَحَ مِنْ بُرْجِكَ الثَّرِيَانُ، وَلَيْسَ الْحَرْبُ لَكَ
بِمَكَانٍ

O Master of the Faithful, the shining stars have failed to illuminate, and because of their failure the entire being is ruined. Therefore, it is necessary for a wise man to keep silence on such a day! And this day of yours is hard, for there is the conjunction of two of the stars, and the scales have lost their balance... Fire is raining from your constellation, and it is not for you to fight on such a day!

Imam Ali said:

أَيُّهَا النَّهْضَانُ الْمُسَيَّبُ بِالْأَقْدَارِ الْخَوِيفُ (الْمَحْذُورُ - خَل) مِنْ الْأَقْدَارِ، مَا كُنْتَ الْبَارِعَةَ صَالِبَ
الْمِيزَانِ؟ وَفِي أَيِّ مَجْمُوعَةٍ كُنْتَ صَالِبَ الشَّرْكَانِ؟ وَكِرِ النَّالِجِ مِنَ الْأَسَدِ
الشَّاعِلِ فِي الْحَرَكَةِ (مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكَلْبِ - خَل)؟ وَكُنْتِ الْبَرَارِي وَالْزَّرَارِي؟

O you the peasant, you are warning me of events and alerting me to impending accidents! Now tell me about the stars that were in the Zodiac last night, or the other stars that are always there, and in which month Cancer (*hurj saraṭān*) always gathers in one place. And how many are the stars rising in the constellation of Leo? And how long is it since these stars have appeared? And what is the distance between the greatly shining stars and the dimly shining stars?

The peasant said: "To answer your questions, I must refer to my astrolabe." (It is written in *Ilitijāj* that the peasant reached into the sleeve of his robe and took out his astrolabe to refer to it).

The Imam smiled and told him:

وَيْلَكَ يَا دِفْقَانُ، أَنْتَ مُسَيَّبُ الْكَائِبَاتِ؟ أَمْ كَيْفَ تَقْضِي عَلَى الْبَحَارِيَّتِ؟ وَأَنْتَ شَاعِلُ الْأَسَدِ
مِنَ النَّالِجِ؟ أَمْ بِالْزُّهْرَةِ مِنَ الْوَالِجِ²⁷⁷ وَالْجَوَائِعِ؟ وَمَا قَوْدُ الشَّرَارِي الْحَرَكَةِ؟ وَكِرِ قَوْدِ
شُعَاعِ الشَّرَارِي؟ وَكِرِ الْعَصِيلِ بِالْفُتُوتِ؟

O peasant, it is your existence that causes the stable stars to move! It is a wonder how you command the planets and stars! And tell me what the hours of the constellation of Leo's stars are among the other stars? And what is the relation of Venus to the rest of the planets? And how fast is the circling of the lesser and hidden stars compared to the stars in motion? And how vast is the array of the illuminating and shining stars? And how many stars shine between dawn and sunrise?

The peasant said: "O Master of the Faithful, I have no knowledge about these subjects." Imam Ali told him:

يَا دِفْقَانُ، هَلْ تَجْعَلُكَ أَنْ أَتَّكِلَ يَدَكَ عَلَى الْعَصِيِّ؟ وَأَحْرَقْتَ نُورَ الْوَالِجِ؟ وَتَحْدَيْتُكَ
نَارَ قَارِسٍ؟ وَأَنْهَضْتَ مَنَازِلَ الْهِنْدِ؟ وَغَرَقْتَ سَرَائِدَهُ؟ وَأَنْقَضَ جِسْنَ الْأَنْدَلُسِ؟ وَتَجْعَلُ
(قَمَح - خَل) بِتَرْكِ الزُّومِ بِالزُّومِيَّةِ؟

O peasant, have you enough knowledge to understand that the house of China's King has been moved somewhere else? And some houses in Zanzibar have been destroyed in fire? And the Fire Temple of Persia is extinguished? And the Indian Minaret has been ruined? And Sarāndīb Peninsula has sunk deep into the water? That the wall surrounding Spain has cracked apart? And that the Chief and Commander of Rome has married a Roman woman and had a child?

It is said in another hadith:

الْبَارِحَةَ وَقَعَ بَيْتُ الْبَصِينِ، وَانْفَرَجَ بُرْجُ مَاجِينِ، وَسَقَطَ سُوْرُ سَرَادِسِبِ، وَالْهَزَمَ بِطَرِيقِ الرُّومِ
بَارْمِينِيَّةَ، وَهَدَدَ دِيَانَ الْيَهُودِ بِإِيلَةَ، وَهَاجَ الثَّنَلُ بِوَادِي الثَّنَلِ، وَهَلَكَ تِلْكَ إِفْرِيقِيَّةُ أَكُنْتُ عَلِيًّا
بِهَذَا؟ قَالَ: لَا يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"Last night, a wall collapsed in China, the Tower of Machin cracked wide open, the Roman's chief and commander of more than ten thousand soldiers fled to Armenia, the great Rabbi of the Jews died in the town of Ilah in the territory of the ants, the ants moved forward, and the King of Africa died, so were you aware of all these events?" The peasant answered: "No, O Master of the Faithful!"

In a separate hadith it is stated:

أَخْبَلْتُكَ حَكْمَتَ بَاحْتِلَابِ الشَّمْسِيِّ وَزُحَلِ إِمَّا أَتَاكَ فِي الشَّفَقِ، وَلَا حَ لَكَ شُعَاعُ الْمَرْجِ فِي الشَّمْسِ، وَ
أَسْأَلُ جِرْمُهُ بِجَرْمِ الْقَمَرِ

"Can you guess the wisdom behind Mars and Jupiter, that the rays of Jupiter shine at dusk and those of Mars at dawn, and its mass joins the mass of the moon?"

Then Imam Ali said:

الْبَارِحَةَ سَعَدَ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ عَالِيٍّ، وَوُلِدَ فِي كُلِّ عَالِيٍّ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفًا. وَاللَّيْلَةَ بَيُوتُ مِنْهُمْ وَهَذَا مِنْهُمْ وَ
أَوْمَى يَدِي إِلَى سَمْعَيْنِ مَسْتَعْلِيٍّ الْحَارِثِيِّ وَكَانَ جَاسُوسًا لِلْخَوَارِجِ فِي عَسْكَرِهِ فَقَتَلَ الْمُتَعَمِّدُ أَنَّهُ يَقُولُ:
عُثْمُوهُ، فَأَعْيَدَ بِنَفْسِهِ فَمَاتَ حَقْرُ الدُّهْقَانِ سَاجِدًا. فَلَمَّا أَتَانِي، قَالَ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ: أَلَمْ أَرَاؤُكَ مِنْ عَيْنِ
الْغُوفِيِّ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى. فَقَالَ: أَنَا وَصَاحِبِي لَا شَرَفِيَّوْنَ وَلَا غَرَبِيَّوْنَ، نَحْنُ تَاشِئَةُ الْقُطْبِ وَأَعْلَامُ الْفَلَكَ
أَتَانَاؤُكَ أَنْتَ دَحْ مِنْ بُرْجِكَ الثِّمَرَانِ، فَكَانَ الْوَاجِبُ أَنْ نَحْكُمَ بِدَلَى لِي عَلَى. أَمَّا نَوْرُهُ وَجِيَاؤُهُ
فَبِنَدِيِّ، وَأَمَّا خَرِيقُهُ وَلَمْبُهُ فَلَمَّحَ عَنِّي. وَهَذِهِ مَسْأَلَةٌ عَمِيقَةٌ أَحْسِبُهَا أَنْ كُنْتُ حَاسِبًا.²⁷⁸

Last night, seventy thousand of the learned men were blessed, and each of the learned ones became the father of seventy thousand babies! And tonight many of them will die, and this man is one of them. While saying this part, he pointed to Sa'd Ibn Mas'adah Ḥārithi, who was from the Khawārij and a spy who had entered his army. That cursed one gathered that the Imam was commanding his men to arrest him. However, he died on the spot on his own. When the peasant witnessed that event, he fell prostrate before the Imam. Then, after his prostration, the Imam asked him: "Would you like me to satisfy you and quench your thirst with the spring of blessings?" He said: "Yes, of course!" The Imam stated: "The Prophet of God and I are neither eastern nor western; we have been created at the Pole and have grown up there; we are the signs of the motion of the firmament and the orbit of the stars—they move about by our existence.

But that which you said—"Fire flames up from your constellation"—it is necessary for you to support judgment and not be against me, because its light and glow are with us, and its ignition and fire arises from us. This is a deep matter. Reflect on it if you are the one to reflect.

The peasant said: "I bear witness that there is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Prophet of God, and that you are Ali, the Guardian of Allah."

The Eminence of Imam Ali in Mathematics

Ibn Abi Laylā says:

Two men were traveling together and were having breakfast. One of them had five loaves of bread and the other three. Right then another one came to them and joined in the breakfast. Then, after satisfying his hunger, he paid them eight *dirhams* for the meal. Those two quarreled about dividing it between them, so to find the solution and settle their dispute, they went to Ali.

The Imam told them: "This is an affair in which there is humiliation; enmity is not right in such a dispute, but peace and friendship is good." The one who had three loaves of bread refused to make peace with his friend and insisted that a fair judgment to be carried out.

The Imam said: "Now that you are not pleased with making peace, your right share is one *dirham* only, and seven *dirhams* for your friend." Then he asked: "By the way, was it not three loaves for you and five loaves for your friend?" The man answered: "Yes, it was so."

The Imam said: "All these become twenty-four shares. You have eaten eight shares of this bread and your guest has also eaten eight shares of it. As he has paid the two of you eight dirhams, a dirham is your share and seven dirhams are your friend's."

The Eminence of Imam Ali in Alchemy

Once he was asked about the branch of knowledge of alchemy, and the Imam answered:

مِيَاخُ الثَّوْبَةِ، وَغِصَّةُ الرُّوَّةِ، وَالنَّاسُ يَسْكُمُونَ فِيهَا بِالطَّلَامِ، وَإِنِّي لَا غَمَّ طَامِرًا قَاتِلَتَهَا، مِيَا
الْهِتَامِ، إِلَّا مَاءٌ جَامِدٌ، وَهَوَاءٌ رَاكِدٌ، وَتَأَرْجِلِيَّةٌ، وَأَرْضٌ سَائِلَةٌ

"Alchemy is as sister of prophecy; it is the guardian of manhood and generosity. People speak only about its external aspect, but I truly know its external and inner aspects. By God, alchemy is no more than solid water, motionless air, running fire, and moving earth."

In the middle of his sermon, they asked the Imam: "Does alchemy exist?" He stated: "It has existed in the past, it exists now, and it will also exist in the future." They asked him what it was made from. The Holiness answered: "Alchemy is from slippery mercury, lead, and alum, rusted iron, copper-rust, and greenish rust."

They asked the Imam to give them more explanations about that subject, so the Imam said:

لَا بَيِّنَةَ عَلَيْهِ، لَكِنَّ الْحُكَمَاءَ الْقَدَمَاءَ مَا زَادُوا عَلَيْهِ كَيْفَا يَلَاغِبُ بِهِ النَّاسُ

"There is no more explanation than what I have said, because the wise and the sages have not said anything about it in the past, because they did not want to make it a toy for the people to play with!"²⁷⁹

Talāyī' Ibn Zarrik has said:

عَلَى الَّذِي قَدْ كُنَّ تَأَخَّرَ قَلْبُهُ 1
عَلَى الَّذِي قَدْ كُنَّ أَفْرَسَ مِنْ عَمَلَا عَلَى صَوَاتِ السَّاحَاتِ الْفَوَارِبِ 2

1. He is Ali whose inward vision witnesses the hidden events,
2. He is Ali who is expert in mounting the lean horse standing on three hoofs and pressing the fourth to the ground (special and fast-running horses that are difficult to control).

The Eminence of Ali in Medicine

It is narrated from the Master of the Faithful that if a premature baby—at six, seven, or nine months' gestation—is born, it can survive; however, if it is born at eight months' gestation, it does not survive.

It also from the Imam that in a year, a child grows as much as the width of four fingers of his hand.

A man asked Imam Ali: "Why does a child sometimes resemble its parents, but now and then it resembles an uncle or cousin?" The Imam turned to Imam Hasan and told him: "Now you answer him."

Imam Hasan said:

If a man has sex with his wife calmly and with no anxiety, in that case the two gametes of the man and the woman begin wrestling, and whichever of them overcomes the other, the baby resemble him or her; that is, if the sperm of the man overcomes the ovum of the woman, the baby resembles him, but if the woman's ovum overcomes the opposite one, the baby looks like her.

However, if a man has sex with his wife in a depressed or abnormal state, both parties become disturbed, and the gametes [sperm and ovum] run either to the right of the woman's womb or to the left. If they fall into the right side of her womb, the child's appearance favors the uncles or the paternal aunts; however, if they go to the left side, they resemble the cousins and aunts—the child looks like them.

It was then the interrogator stood up, saying:

اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يُخَلِّقُ رِثَاتِهِ

"God is most Aware where He sets up His prophetic missions (6:124)."

The Prophet was asked: "How can sperm and ovum change into male or female? He said: "The two lusts of the male and female come together, and then if the lust of the woman overcomes the lust of the man, the baby becomes female, but if the lust of man dominates hers, then the baby is a male."

Ali Ibn Abi Tālib's Knowledge of the Torah

There is a narration concerning Imam Ali's vast knowledge narrated by Usāmah Ibn Zayd and Abu Rāṣ:

Gabriel descended to the Prophet saying: "O Muhammad, now I am giving you glad tidings of a hidden treasure in your offspring." Then he related the story of the Torah to that people in Yemen who had found it

between two black stones, and then he mentioned the names of those people to the Prophet.

Later on those people from Yemen were brought to the Prophet, and he told them: "Keep silent as you are now; speak no more until I inform you of your names as well as those of your fathers, and I know that you have found a copy of the Torah and brought it here with you."

Hearing how truly the Prophet was speaking about them, they handed him the Torah and embraced Islam.

The Prophet brought the Torah near to his head and then invoked God with His specific name, and he opened it and cast a glance at it, and then gave it to Ali saying:

هَذَا ذِكْرُكَ وَلِذُرِّيَّتِكَ مِنْ بَعْدِي

"This is a remembrance for you and your children after me!"

It is stated by Imam Ali about the saying of God:

رُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ تَقْصُصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ

[O Prophet!] We told you the stories of some of the messengers but did not mention to you some others (4:164).

There is a hadith that God the Almighty has set up a Negro messenger, but has not mentioned the explanation of his condition.

Mu'āwiyah wrote a letter to Abu Ayyūb Anṣārī: "I am going to have a discussion with you on a subject to test your intelligence concerning something that you will never forget, like the [night of] Shaybā²⁸⁰, which is never forgotten by a woman."

Imam Ali said: "The thing about which Mu'āwiyah informed Abu Ayyūb was that he was one of the murderers of Othman. The one in whose presence Othman was killed is like Shaybā²⁸¹."

The Knowledge of Imam Ali about Birds and Angels

By means of his great knowledge, he has unveiled the secret languages and communications of birds and angels. Zurārah has narrated from Imam Ṣādiq that Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib said:

عَلَّمَنَا مَطْلِقُ الطَّيْرِ عِلْمَهُ سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَكُلُّ دَابَّةٍ فِي بَرٍّ أَوْ بَحْرٍ

"As Solomon Ibn Dāwūd was taught the languages of the birds, we have also been taught the languages of every kind of moving animal, either in the land or in the sea."²⁸²

It is narrated from Ibn 'Abbās that Imam Ali said:

The crowing of a rooster announces God's remembrance, and the neighing of a horse means: "O Creator, make victorious your believing slaves upon the unbelieving slaves!" The braying of donkey is: "May God curse the custom authorities who take taxes from oppressors!" A donkey raises its bray in front of Satan. The cracking of frogs means:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْمُتَعَالَى فِي كُلِّ مَجْرٍ

"Glory be to my praiseworthy Creator, who is prayed to within the frightening parts of the sea." The sound of the chirping of the *qabbarah* (a kind of a bird that nests in the deserts and the mountains) means:

اللَّهُمَّ اَنْزِلْ مُبَارَكًا عَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

"O my Creator, a curse be upon the enemies of Muhammad and his descendants."

'Abdī says:

وَعَلَّمْتَ الَّذِي عَلَّمْتَ بَابَهُ وَالْمَلِكَ الَّذِي لَا يَخْلُقُ
فَرَأَيْتَ فِي الرَّزَى شَرًّا وَغَيْرًا وَتَجَدَّافَتِ وَضَعِ الْوَاحِشِيَّةَ 2.

1. [O you, Master of the faithful,] you are trained by One Who has trained all creatures; He inspired you with what the others are not inspired with,
2. And this training brought you to a station of high nobility, dignity, and respect that cannot be attributed to anyone else.

Sa'īd Ibn Ṭurayf has narrated a long hadith from Imam Ṣādiq, and then together with Abu Umāmah Bāhilī has narrated from the Prophet another long hadith. We will narrate the hadith of Abu Umāmah. He says:

People went to the Prophet to congratulate him on his new baby. While the gathering was peaceful, a man stood up among the people and said to His Excellency: "May my father and mother be made your sacrifice! Today, we have witnessed a strange thing from Ali." The Prophet asked: "What have you seen?"

He said: "Earlier we got ready to come here to greet you and congratulate you and your newborn baby, Husayn, but Ali prevented us from coming on time; he said at the moment one hundred twenty-four

thousand angels had arrived to meet and congratulate the Prophet. We were very surprised at such a great number of angels."

The Prophet smiled and turned to Ali, saying: "How did you know the number of the angels who came to see me?"

Ali said: "O Prophet of God, I heard one hundred twenty-four thousand words; therefore I understood that the number of the angels was one hundred twenty-four thousand."

The Prophet of God said: "O Abu al-Hasan, may God increase your knowledge and forbearance!"

In his book *Fā'iḳ*, Zamakhsharī has narrated that some people asked Shurayh Qāḍī about a woman who was newly divorced, and according to her claim, she had gone through three menstrual periods since her divorce.

Shurayh said: "If three close friends and relatives of hers, who knew her condition before her divorce, witnessed that she had gone through menstrual periods three times a month before her divorce, then her claim is acceptable."

Ali, using the term Roman term, said: "This judgment of yours is correct; however, it is in the case that the woman is accused [of indecency] that is, she is suspected of lying, otherwise there is no need of accusing her."

In *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, it is narrated by Sa'd Qumi:

On his way to Nahrawān, Imam Ali stopped at Qatqatā and some people gathered around him complaining of their heavy duties and the levies they were obligated to pay each year. They were speaking to Imam Ali in their local language, Nabṭī, and they continued saying they had in their neighborhood some people who had vaster land than they had, but paid a smaller levy than they paid.

Imam Ali gave them a response in their own Nabṭī language, which in Arabic meant:

دُخْنُ صَغِيرٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ دُخْنِ كَبِيرٍ

"Little seeds are better than coarse seeds."²⁸³

Also, it is narrated that once Imam Ali asked the daughter of Yazdgird what her name was. She answered that she was called Jahān Bānūyah. Then the Imam told her in the Persian language: "In your language you are called Shahr Bānūyah."

Imam Ali Interprets the Sound of the Bell of a Church

The author of *Misbāḥi al-Wā'iz*, and almost all the Shi'a scholars, has narrated from Ḥārith A'war, Zayd Ibn Ṣuḥān, Ṣa'ṣa'at Ibn Ṣuḥān, Barā' Ibn Sīrah, Aṣḥagh Ibn Nubātah, Jābir Ibn Sharaḥbil, and Mahmoud Ibn Kawwā' that Imam Ali said:

A bell represents:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَالِمًا، إِنَّ الْمَوْلَى صَمْدٌ يَحْيَى، بِمَوْلَانَا وَخَارِعًا، لَوْلَا جِلْمُهُ كُنَّا نَقَى.

"Glory be to God Who is truly the Truth. The eternal Master! He is the Patient and Tolerant towards us; if it were not for His patience, we would be afflicted!"

He continues:

Our Master questions us and has discussions with us truly and rightly, and He agrees with us and approves of us. O our Master, do not make us perish until You forgive us! Do appreciate us and protect us by taking us as Your servants. Your patience and tolerance have released us from affliction. Your forgiveness has made us courageous; this world has cheated us. It has made us busy in our daily games and amusing ourselves! O man of this world, you are accumulating and amassing things constantly; for a while remain quiet, be peaceful and reflect about your final day!

بَابُ الدُّنْيَا دَعَا، تَفْنَى الدُّنْيَا قَرْنَآ قَرْنَا، مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ يَمْنِي عَنَّا، إِلَّا تَهْوَى بِمَا رَكَا، قَدْ ضَيَعْنَا دَارَ أَتَى،
وَأَسْتَوْعَلْنَا دَارَ أَتَى الدُّنْيَا قَرْنَآ قَرْنَا كَلَامُهَا، كَلَامُهَا، كَلَامُهَا، كَلَامُهَا، كَلَامُهَا، كَلَامُهَا، كَلَامُهَا، كَلَامُهَا،
فِيهَا مَوْتٌ، تَقْلًا تَقْلًا دَعَا دَعَا، مَا مِنْ الدُّنْيَا مَهْلًا مَهْلًا، زَيْنَ مَا بَالِي وَزَيْنَآ وَزَيْنَآ، لَوْلَا جَهْلِي مَا لَنْ كُنْتُ،
عِنْدِي الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا سَحَابًا، غَيْرَ أَخِيرٍ أَخِيرًا، فَيَا قَيْنَا خُزْنَا خُزْنَا، مَاذَا مِنْ ذَاكَ ذَا (أَمْ ذَاكَ زَط) مِنْهَا
(أَسْقَى زَط)، تَرْجُو تَجْوَى، تَحْنَى تَرْدَى، يَجْلُ قَبْلَ الْمَوْتِ الْوَزَا، مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ يَمْنِي عَنَّا، إِلَّا أَوْهَنَ
بِمَا رَكَا، إِنَّ الْمَوْلَى قَدْ أَتَدْرَنَا إِيَّاكَ مُخَضَّرًا غَرًّا لَا يَهْمًا.

O you, the off-spring of this world, from toiling and trying so much, this world makes you perish, you as well the greatest of men. Not a day passes by but one column of life is knocked down! We destroyed the everlasting home and made our home in this passing world! The world makes person after person perish, and those who came before have perished have tasted the syrup of death. All of them have died, all have been buried. All have died and left this world and been buried in their

graves. O you the creature of this world, be for a while quiet and measure your future wisely; to me this world is no more than a prison. If some good work is done, surely the reward for it is good, and if it is an ugly action, the reward is also ugly; then gradually sorrow dominates you! How long are you going to exclaim and say: What is this? Who is that and how much is this? Or, This one is better and great! If you hope you will attain it, and if you are frightened, you become mean! Consider the balance of your deeds before your death. A day does not pass by unless one of our limbs becomes weaker and prepares us to meet death. Our Master has warned us that we will turn up deaf and dumb on the Day of Resurrection.

The narrator says: "Right then the church bell stopped.²⁸⁴ A monk who was there heard all that was said, and right then, he embraced Islam and said: 'I had already heard that after all the messengers, one would come to cite interpretation of the sound of bells in the church!'"²⁸⁵

.....

It has been said unanimously that the most praiseworthy and acceptable people among the creatures are the pious ones. God states:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

In fact the most honorable of you with God is the one who is the most God-fearing (49:13).

Moreover, it has been said that the best and the most admirable among the pious are the most humble. That is what God, the Almighty has stated:

وَأَزَلَّتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلتَّائِبِينَ غَيْرَ مُبِيدٍ ۖ هَذَا مَا وَعَدُونَا لِكُلِّ أَزَابٍ حَفِيظٍ ۖ مَنْ خَشِيَ الزَّكْرَ فَإِنَّهُ يَجِئُ بِقَلْبٍ نَشِيبٍ

"...and the Garden will be brought closer to the God-fearing and there is no distance in between."

[And it is said]: *This is what you have been promised, and there is a guard for everyone who turns to observe it who fears the Merciful and comes to His presence with a repentant heart (50:31-33).*

Apart from this, God the Exalted has stated:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ.

Yet only those of His obedient worshippers who have knowledge are wary of Allah (35:28).

It has been said that the most honorable ones among the knowledgeable and learned are those who lead people to the straight path and guide them to the Truth. They are the obedient leaders but not the followers. For God, the Almighty, states:

أَتَمْتُمْ هِدًى إِلَى الْحَقِّ أَشَى أَنْ يَتَّبِعَ أَتَمُّ لَا يَهْدِي إِلَّا أَنْ يَهْدَى؟

So is someone who guides to the Truth worthier to be followed or someone who does not guide unless he himself is guided? (10:35).

It has been said unanimously that the most learned who acts on justice is he who guides people to the Truth in the easiest way, and according to the statement of God, he must be a guide but not a follower so as to judge certain cases most correctly:

يُحْكَمْ بِدَوَاعِلٍ مِنْكُمْ

...but two fair-minded among yourselves should judge it and two fair-minded among yourselves should be witness (5:95).

According to what has been mentioned, the Book of God and the Sunnah of the Prophet, and all sages and wise people unanimously say that after the demise of the Prophet, the best man among the people was Ali.²⁸⁶

In the book *Tadhkirat khawāṣṣ al-Umma*, Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has introduced a section about the statement of Omar when he said:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ مُعْضَلَةٍ لَيْسَ لَهَا أَبُو حَسَنٍ.

"I take refuge in God for a difficult matter [of mine] and Abu al-Hasan is not there [to help me]," and many other similar questions asked by Omar. Then he quotes Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in *Faḍā'il*, with his chains from Musayyib, and narrates that Omar Ibn Khaṭṭāb said a similar thing, such as: "I take refuge in God for a difficult matter [of mine] but Abu al-Hasan is not there [to help me]!"

Ibn Musayyib says: "There is a story about this saying of Omar that goes like this: the King of Rome wrote a letter to Omar asking him his view about some different cases, and Omar presented those cases to his companions to find answers to them, but he did not succeed. Then he handed over the cases to Imam Ali, and he immediately found the most correct answers to them."

Now, as to the nature of the cases: Ibn Musayyib mentions what the letter of the King of Rome was about. He counts all of them one by one until he comes to the question of the sound of the church bell and what it means.

Then Ibn Musayyib explains in detail the answers of Imam Ali to the different questions of the people who had asked him, and then

unveils meaning of the sound of the church bell, saying: "Clack click, right, true, step by step, fairly and justly, honestly and truly, the world has indeed drowned you. The generations have passed away century after century; not a day passes away without taking some of us with it. Our Master [God] truly said that we are caravans marching ahead one after another!"

Ibn Musayyib says that when the King of Rome read Imam Ali's letter, he said: "This letter cannot have been written except by one in the Household of the Prophethood." Then he asked to know who the replier was. His men told him the letter was from the cousin of Muhammad.

Next, the King of Rome wrote to him a letter stating:

Peace be upon you, I quite understood your answer, and I know that you are from the Household of the Prophethood. I know that bravery and knowledge are attributed to you. Now, I beg you to tell me something about your religion and the Spirit that God has mentioned in His book, such as:

يَسْأَلُكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلُ الرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

They ask you about the spirit. Say, "[The knowledge about the] spirit is at the command of my Lord" (17:85).

Imam Ali replied to him:

أَمَّا هَذَا، فَالرُّوحُ نَسْكَةٌ لَطِيفَةٌ، وَلَمْعَةٌ شَرِيفَةٌ مِنْ صَنَعَةِ بَارِيهَا، وَقُدْرَةٌ مُنِيبَتُهَا، أَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ خَزَائِنِ مُلْكِهِ، وَأَسْكَنَهَا فِي مُلْكِهِ، فَهِيَ عِنْدَكَ لَكَ سَبَبٌ، وَلَدُ عِنْدَكَ وَدِيعةٌ، فَإِذَا أَخَذْتَ مَا لَكَ عِنْدَهُ، أَخَذَ مَا لَهُ عِنْدَكَ وَالسَّلَامُ²⁸⁷

Praise and laudation be to God, the Spirit is a fair illuminating and specifically noble being that is created by God, the Creator—it has come into existence by the power of the Originator. God has drawn it out from His treasury of power and placed it in His own Kingdom. Therefore, the Spirit is a means for you in the presence of God, and you are trusted by God to have it. It is because you have used and enjoyed whatever good you have with God, and God has trusted you with what He has, and then He takes away His right from you.

We are going to end this discussion here, but first it is worthwhile to present the translation of a remarkable elegy of the late Hājī Mīrzā Ḥabībullāh Khurasani.

Today, which is the day of trouble, pass round the pleasant goblet,
I have ended with the cup and goblet, for it is time for Khumm and
Ghadir!

Your glance attracts men and wins the hearts of all creatures, for your
deer are enamored by the hunting lion;

By those two charming eyes of yours, the lions of the entire world are
captured.

The sun as well the stars is captured by your heavenly hair!

Enjoy your cup by the cup-holder today, for the wheel is old today

Today, by the command of the true, Ali has become the commander!

It is being announced to the community the secret hidden behind the
screen,

For that King of Kings is going to sit on the throne;

No matter how much we have praised him, but we have not said one-
hundredth of it.

**Lessons One Hundred Seventy-Seven
to One Hundred Eighty**

**Imam Ali is Specialist in the Meaning of the
Old Testament and Bible, and Is Proud to An-
swer All Kinds of Questions**



LESSONS ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SEVEN TO ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

On the chastity of the prophets and the Imams, upon them be peace

And blessing be upon Muhammad and his pure Household, and may God's curse be on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! And there is no power or strength except for the Exalted Glorious God.

God has stated in His Glorious Book:

[illegible]

And thus [that is, Islam is only for God and the confirmation of His Book and messengers] We have sent down to you this Book. Those to whom We have given the Book believe in it—and some among them follow it—and except the unbelievers [no one] den[ies] Our signs. And you [O Muhammad] were not the reader of any Scripture before this, nor did you write any with your own hand; otherwise, the followers of falsehood would suspect [this Qur'an]. Rather this [Qur'an] is clear Revelations in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge; and none denies Our signs but the wrongdoers (29:47–49).

As a result, the nature of the Qur'an cannot be written with the alphabet; it can neither be seen nor demonstrated nor presented, but all the verses are in the chests of the specialists in the Qur'an. The chests of the men of knowledge are the treasuries for the verses and wisdom of the Qur'an. Not one among the nations, not any of the companions and the other great scholars, had such vast knowledge as Imam Ali. It is as if his nature was mixed up with the nature of the Qur'an.²⁸⁸

Ibn Shahr Āshūb says that Ibn Abi al-Bukhtārī in six ways, Ibn Mufaddal in ten, Ibrahim Thaqaḥī in fourteen ways, ‘Adī Ibn Ḥātām and Asbagh Ibn Nubātah, ‘Alqamat Ibn Qays, and Yahyā Ibn Umm Ṭawīl and Zarr Ibn Ḥubaysh, ‘Abāyat Ibn Rabi‘, ‘Ibāyat Ibn Rufā‘ah and Abu Ṭufayl have narrated that while pointing to his chest, Imam Ali said in the presence of the Muhājirin and Anṣār:

كَيْفَ مِلَى عِلْمًا؟ لَوْ وَجَدْتُ لَهَ طَالِبًا. سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي. هَذَا سَقَطَ الْعِلْمُ. هَذَا الْعَابُ رَسُولِ
 اللَّهِ، هَذَا عَارِضِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ رَقًا. فَاسْأَلُونِي فَإِنَّ عِنْدِي عِلْمَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ
 أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَوْ ثَلَيْتُ إِلَى الْوَسَادَةِ ثُمَّ اجْلِسْتُ عَلَيْهَا، لَمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَ أَهْلِ التَّوْرَةِ بِتَوَارِيهِمْ، وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ
 الْإِنْجِيلِ بِالْمَجْلُومِ، وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الزَّبُورِ بِزُيُودِهِمْ، وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الْفُرْقَانِ بِفُرْقَانِهِمْ، حَتَّى يَتَأَدَّى كُلُّ كِتَابٍ
 بِأَنْ عَلَيْهِ حَكْمِي بِحُكْمِ اللَّهِ فِي.

وَفِي رَوَايَةٍ: حَتَّى يَنْطِقَ اللَّهُ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ. وَفِي رَوَايَةٍ: حَتَّى يَزْهَرَ كُلُّ كِتَابٍ مِنْ هَذِهِ

السُّكْبِ وَيَقُولَ: يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ عَلِيًّا قَضَى بِقَضَائِكَ

ثُمَّ قَالَ: سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي، فَوَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَبَرَأ النَّسَمَةَ، لَوْ سَأَلْتُمُونِي عَنْ آيَةٍ فِي

آيَةٍ أَنْزَلْتُ أَوْ فِي هَاهُنَا أَنْزَلْتُ؟ مَكِّيَّهَا وَمَدِينِيَّهَا وَسَفَرِيَّهَا وَحَضْرِيَّهَا نَاصِحِيَّهَا وَمَنْسُوحِيَّهَا وَ

مُحْكَمِيَّهَا وَمُنْشَأِيَّهَا وَتَأْوِيلِيَّهَا وَتَرْجُمِيَّهَا لَا أَخْبِرُكُمْ.

See how this chest of mine is overfilled with knowledge? I wish I could find a demander for this knowledge. So do question me before missing me [that is, before I pass away]. This is a basket full of knowledge; it has been transferred to me by the saliva of the Holy Prophet. This knowledge of mine resembles the feeding of its chick by a bird; I have received this knowledge in the same way. Do ask me whatever you want, for the first and last knowledge is with me.

Beware! I swear by God that if they set me up as a leader to govern,²⁸⁹ and give me the chance to command, then I will judge the Christians by their Book, the Jews by their own Book, and the people of the Psalms with the Psalms and the people of the Criterion [i.e. the Qur'an] with their Book of Criterion. In that case, each Book will bear witness that Ali has judged by the command of God.

There is a hadith that says: "If God made the Torah and the Bible say..." or another hadith says: "If each one of these Books illuminates and speaks [to the people], they would say: 'O my Creator, Ali has commanded justly by Your Command!'"

Once again, Imam Ali said:

Do ask your questions from me before missing me [that is, before I die]. By God, Who splits the seeds under the earth, and by Him who created the soul, if you ask me verse by verse about the Qur'an, whether the verses were sent down at night or during the day, I will let you know about them. I will tell you whether a verse has been revealed in Mecca

or Medina, the verses that are sent down on the journey or at home, and which one is abrogated and which is repealed, which verses are decisive and which are ambiguous. I will let you know all about them.

Ibn ʿAūdī says:

وَمَنْ ذَاكَ سَامِعٍ يُجِدُّ وَلَمْ يَزَلْ يَقُولُ: سَأَلُونِي فَأَجِبْ وَمَحْجَمٍ 1
 سَأَلُونِي فَمِنْ جَنْبِي عِلْمٌ وَرِثْتُهُ عَنِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مَا كُنْتُ مَعِيَ بِهِ أَلْتَمِمْ 2
 سَأَلُونِي عَنْ طُرُقِ السَّمَوَاتِ إِنِّي بِهَا عَنْ سُلُوكِ الطَّرِيقِ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَغْلَمُ 3
 وَلَوْ كَشَفَ اللَّهُ الْبَطَانَ أَرَادَ بِهِ يَقِينًا عَلَيَّ مَا كُنْتُ أَدْرِي وَأَنْتُمْ 4

1. Who is a man of power to be able to discuss with him in greatness, while he always said: "Do ask me about what is lawful and what is unlawful!"
2. Do ask me, because both sides of my ribs are full of knowledge that I have inherited it from Mustafā [i.e. the Prophet], so do ask me, for I will lose nothing I have treasured in me.
3. Ask me from the ways of the sky because my knowledge about them is greater than my knowledge of the roads I am walking on.
4. And even if God removes from my eyes the veil of the unseen, surely nothing more will add to my present understanding!

Abu Nuʿaym Ḥāfiẓ Isfahani narrates by means of his chains of narrators from Zayd Ibn Ali, from his father, from his grandfather, narrating that Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib said:

عَلَّمَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أَلْفَ بَابٍ، يَفْتَحُ كُلُّ بَابٍ إِلَى أَلْفِ بَابٍ

"The Prophet of God taught me a thousand gates of knowledge and each gate opened for me a thousand more gates!"

Abu Jaʿfar Ibn Bābwayh has narrated this hadith in *Khīṣāl* in 24 different ways, and Saʿd Ibn Abdullah Qumi has narrated it in 66 ways in *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*.

It is from Imam Ṣādiq that:

كُنْ فِي ذُوَابَةِ سَيْفِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَحِيفَةٌ ضَمِنَتْ فِيهَا الْأَحْرُوفُ الَّتِي يَفْتَحُ كُلُّ حَرْفٍ
 أَلْفَ حُرُوفٍ، فَمَا خَرَجَ مِنْهَا حَرْفٌ كَانَ حَتَّى السَّاعَةِ

"There was a letter in a small bag tied to the sword of the Prophet, and there were some letters written on it, and each letter was enough to open the gate for a thousand more letters; up till now, there have not been revealed more than two of them."

It is narrated that Ali gave that letter to Hasan, and he read a few letters from it. Then he handed it to Husayn, and he too read some of it. Next he gave it to Muhammad Ibn Hanafiyyah, but he could not even open it.

Abu al-Qāsim Bustī says:

It resembles this statement:

الرَّهَانِي كُلُّ مَكِيلٍ فِي الْمَنْعَةِ أَيْ مَوْضِعُ كُلِّ وَفِي كُلِّ مَوْضِعٍ

"Usury and unlawful profit in trading is unbalanced measuring; that is, whatever is traded by measurement must be measured the same everywhere and every time."

And it seems that this saying:

يَمِيلُ مِنَ الْبَيْضِ كُلُّ مَادَقٍ أَغْلَاةٍ وَعَلَاةٍ اسْتَقْلَهُ

"Among the birds' eggs, the ones with narrow points on top and flat bottoms are lawful [to eat]" is similar to this saying:

يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الشَّاهِكِ كُلُّ ذِي نَابٍ، وَذِي مَخْلَبٍ مِنَ الطَّيْرِ، وَيَمِيلُ الْبَقِي.

"Among the fierce animals, the one that is unlawful to eat is the one that stings, and among the birds, those that have fierce nails; but apart from these two kinds, all are lawful to eat."

Himyarī says:

عَدَّتْهُ فِي مَجْلِسٍ وَاحِدٍ أَلْفَ حَدِيثٍ مُجِبِّ حَاجِبٍ
كُلُّ حَدِيثٍ مِنْ أَسَاطِيرِهِ يَفْتَحُ أَلْفَ عُدَّةٍ خَلِيبٍ
فَلَيْكَ وَقْتُ أَلْفِ نَابٍ لَهُ يَفِيهَا جَاغُ الْمَحْكَمِ الصَّابِ

The Prophet taught Ali in a certain session a thousand extraordinary hadiths [that no one could go through],
Each one of those hadiths, by an auditor, could open a thousand gates to other hadiths and knowledge,
So, each of those hadiths led Ali to a thousand more decisive and stable hadiths and wisdoms.

Moreover, Himyarī says:

وَكَهَاهُ بِأَلْفِ حَدِيثٍ قَدْ عَلَّمَهُ مِنْ وَخِي تَجِيدٍ²⁹⁰
قَدْ عَلَّمَهُ فِي مَجْلِسٍ بِمِثْلِهَا وَأَسْبَاهُهَا وَقْتُ الْحُدُودِ

It is enough for Ali to learn and memorize thousands of hadiths about the revelations that were sent to the Prophet.

He learned and memorized them with their meanings in a single session.

Ḥimyarī also says:

عَلَى أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَخُو الْمَدَى وَأَفْضَلُ ذِي نَعْلٍ وَمَنْ كَانَ حَافِيًا 1
أَسْرَأَيْدِ أَمْتَدَّ الْعِلْمُ بِجَمَلَةٍ وَكَانَ لَدُونِ الْبَرِيَّةِ وَاعِيًا 2
وَدَوْنَهُ فِي مَجْلِسٍ مِنْهُ وَاحِدٍ بِأَلْفِ حَدِيثٍ كُلُّهَا كَانَتْ هَادِيًا 3
وَكُلُّ حَدِيثٍ مِنْ أُولَئِكَ فَاتَحَ لَهُ أَلْفَ بَابٍ فَاتَحَتْهَا كَمَا هِيَ. 4²⁹¹

1. Ali is the Master of the Faithful, associated with the Guidance, and the most virtuous man finding his way to this world, no matter if he strutted on the earth in sandals or barefooted.
2. Ahmad [i.e. the Prophet] taught him the whole of hidden and manifest knowledge. He never taught it to anyone else in the world, and Ali took all that knowledge and kept it with him.
3. In a single session, Ahmad taught him a thousand hadiths, all useful for the guidance of humans.
4. Each of those hadiths opened a thousand more hadiths for Ali. Ali also kept them safe within him without altering anything in them.

All of the following—Abān Ibn Taghlib, Husayn Ibn Mu'āwīyah, Sulaymān Ja'farī, and Ismā'īl Ibn Abdullah Ibn Ja'far—have narrated from Imam Ṣādiq who said:

When the death of the Prophet was about to happen, and he was in the final days of his life, Ali went to meet His Excellency. The Prophet let Ali go under his sheet and said:

يَا عَلِيُّ، إِذَا أَنَا مَيِّتٌ فَتَسَلَّلْنِي وَكَهْنِي، ثُمَّ أَقْبِدْنِي وَسَائِلْنِي وَأَكْشِبْ.

"O Ali, when I die, give me my final ritual washing and wrap me up in a shroud; and then make me sit; speak with me and write it down."

It is given in *Tahdhib al-Aḥkām* in this way:

قَدْ بَجَّاعَ كَهْنِي وَأَجْلَسْنِي ثُمَّ سَأَلْنِي عَمَائِشَتِ، فَوَاللَّهِ لَا سَائِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَجَبْتُكَ فِيهِ

"In that situation hold my shroud from every corner and try to make me sit, and then ask me whatever you want to. By God, whatever you ask me in that state, I will answer you [word by word]."

It is in the hadith of Abu 'Awāna with his own chains that:

قَمَلْتُ قَاتِلِي بِمَا هُوَ كَاتِبٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ.²⁹²

"Ali said: 'I did so, and the Prophet of God informed me about all events until the Day of Resurrection."

Jamī' Ibn 'Umayr Taymī has narrated from 'Āyisha, who said: "It was as if the soul of the Prophet of God flew into Ali's hands and Ali put it in his mouth."

I have heard Ṣafwānī saying:

Abu Bakr Ibn Mahrawayh, with his chain of narrators from Umm Salamah, has narrated that he said: "I was sitting in the presence of the Prophet, and he handed me a letter saying: 'Anyone of them who takes my place after my demise, and does whatever I have commanded so far, if he demands this letter, then give it to him.'" Then Umm Salamah mentions the rulership of Abu Bakr, Omar, and Othman, that they had not demanded the letter.

Umm Salamah said:

When people swore allegiance to Ali's caliphate, he came down from the pulpit, and when leaving the mosque he told me: "O Umm Salamah, do bring that letter that the Prophet of God had written and handed to you." I asked Ali: "What! Are you the real owner of it?" He said: "Yes, I am." The letter was with me, so I handed it to him. Some among the people asked Ali what the letter was about and what was written in it. Ali said: "It is about all the affairs that will happen before the Resurrection."

It is given in one of the hadiths of Ibn 'Abbās: "When Ali became the caliph and took control of the government, he went to Umm Salamah and asked her for the letter. Then after receiving it, he read it and said: 'This is eternal knowledge!'"

Imam Ṣādiq stated:

يُصَوِّنُ الْمَلَكُ وَيَدْعُوْنَ التَّمَرِ الْعَظِيمِ.

"[These] people suck and lick water out of little pits but overlook water running in a great river."

When they asked about the meaning of this sentence, he stated:

عِلْمُ التَّائِبِينَ بِأَمْرِهِ أَوْ حَاةِ اللَّهِ إِلَى مُحَمَّدٍ فَجَلَّ مُحَمَّدٌ ذَلِكَ كُلَّهُ عِنْدَ عَلِيٍّ، وَكَانَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَدْعُو فِي الْعِلْمِ دَعْوَى مَا سَمِعَ قَطْرًا مِنْ أَحَدٍ

"God bestowed the whole of the knowledge of the messengers on Muhammad, and Muhammad trusted the whole of the knowledge to Ali, and Ali claimed something about his knowledge that no one before had claimed."

Ḥanash Kināni has narrated:

إِنَّهُ سَمِعَ عَلِيًّا يَقُولُ: وَاللَّهِ قَدْ عَلِمْتُ بِتَرْغِيهِ الرِّسَالَاتِ وَصَدِيقِي الْعِدَاتِ وَتَمَامِ الْكَلِمَاتِ

I heard Ali saying: "By God, I reached propagating the commands of my Lord, confirming the promises of my God. I have received and perceived all words of my Creator. Indeed limbs of mine are full with knowledge; I wish I could find one who could bear it and be witness of it"

Another statement of his is the following:

لَوْ كُفِيتَ الْغِطَاءَ مَا زِدْتُ يَقِينًا

"If the veil was drawn back, nothing would increase my certainty."

There is a hadith from Salmān that His Excellency stated:

عِنْدِي عِلْمُ الْكَلَامِ وَالْجَلَالِ وَالْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَالْأَنْتَلَابِ، وَفَضْلُ الْخِطَابِ، وَمَوْلِدُ الْإِسْلَامِ وَمَوْلِدُ الْفُكْرِ، وَأَنَا صَاحِبُ الْمَيْمِ، وَأَنَا الْقَارِئُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَدَوْلَةُ الدُّوَلِ فَتَلُونِي عَمَّا يَكُونُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ وَ عَمَّا كُنْ قَبْلِي وَعَلَى عَهْدِي وَإِلَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَ اللَّهُ

I have the knowledge of insurrection and calamity, the knowledge of the commandments [of God], the knowledge of genealogy; I have the knowledge of distinguishing true from false, the knowledge of the place of birth of Islam and infidelity, the knowledge of the branding iron; I am the greatest criterion, I am the center of revolution. So whatever you need to know, ask me about futures affairs, whatever will happen until the Day of Resurrection, and whatever has happened in the past, and in my time, until the generated and created world exists and worships the Creator.

Ibn Musayyib says:

مَا كَانَ فِي اصْطِحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحَدٌ يَقُولُ: سَلُونِي، غَيْرَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ²⁹³

"There was not among the companions of the Prophet of God anyone to say: 'Ask me [whatever you want]' except Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib."

And Ibn Shubruma says:

مَا أَحَدٌ كَانَ عَلَى الْبُتْرِ: سَلُونِي، غَيْرَ عَلِيٍّ

"There was not anyone to say on the pulpit: 'Ask me [whatever you want]' save Ali."

And God states: "The Qur'an is evidence for everything." And He also states:

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ²⁹⁴

And We have recorded everything in the Glorious Divine Book (36:12). And God states:

وَلَا رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَاسِرٌ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ²⁹⁵

There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor any tender or withered [stalk falls] unless it is [recorded] in a manifest Book (6:59).

We know that all these matters are not in the external text of the Qur'an. There remains nothing to think of but to say that the real meanings are in the inner essence of the Book. The Qur'an makes it clear that:

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ²⁹⁶

And no one but God knows the interpretation of it and those well-grounded in knowledge (3:7). It is the very inward meaning of the verses that His Excellency knew and about which he said: "Do ask me whatever you want."

On the other hand, if the questions had been about the apparent meaning of the Qur'an, we see that many people know its outward meaning, and they do not make a single mistake when reciting and translating it. In that case, it would not have been logical for the Imam to say: "Do ask me whatever you do not know," because many people knew the apparent meaning of the Book. Thus, it is quite clear that he had in mind the inward knowledge of the Qur'an. He was the only learned man among the others and deserved to take the position of the Guardianship and Imamate. Ibn Ḥammād says:

قُلْتُ سَلُونِي قَبْلَ هَدْيِي إِنْ لِي عِلْمًا وَمَا فِيكُمْ لَهُ مُسْتَوْدَعٌ 1
وَكَذَلِكَ لَوْ لَيْسَ الْوَسَادُ حَكَمْتُ بِأَلِ كَتَبِ أَلِي فِيهَا الشَّرَائِعُ تُشْرَعُ 2

[O Ali!] You said: "Do ask me before losing me, because I own such vast knowledge that none of you has it."

You also said: "If they let me [sit on a couch and lean back on] a cushion, I shall judge among the people by their own different religious Books."

‘Awnī says:

وَكَمْ غُلُومٌ مَقْفَلَاتٍ فِي الْوَرَى قَدْ فَتَحَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَصْلَانَا 1
وَكَمْ بِحَمْدِ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَضِيَّةٍ مُشْكَلَةٍ عَلَّ بِهَا شِكْلَانَا 2
حَتَّى أَقْرَبْتُ أَنْفُسَ الْقَوْمِ بِأَنْ لَوْ لَا الْوَرَى ارْتَكَبْتُ ضَلَالَانَا 3

1. And how much of knowledge was unknown to the people that Ali revealed it for them,
2. And praise be to God that so many difficult cases and events happened to men but Ali solved them,
3. It was so that the opponent nations themselves confessed, saying: "If the successor were not Ali, we would be lost."

Moreover, 'Awnī says:

وَمَنْ رَكِبَ الْأَغْوَادَ يَخْطُبُ فِي الْوَرَى وَقَالَ: سَلُونِي قَبْلَ هَدْيِي لِأَهْمَانَا.

"[Ali is the same man] who ascended the wooden pulpit and made a speech among the people saying: 'Do ask me before my death so that I may answer your questions.'"

Ibn Ḥammād says:

مَنْ تَمَنَّى بِمُقَابِلِ قَبْلَهُ قَالَ: سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي.

"Have you heard any orator before him say: 'Do ask me before missing me?'"

Ibn Ḥammād also says:

سَلُونِي أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ سَلُونِي قَبْلَ هَدْيَانِي فَسَيَدِي عِلْمُ مَا كَانَ وَمَا بَاقِي وَمَا بَاقِي
سَهْنًا أَتَىكَ الْعَالِي فِي عِلْمِكَ وَبَاقِي وَقُلْتُ الْحَقُّ بَاقِي وَلَمْ تَطِيقْ بِبَحْثَانِي.

"O people, ask me! Ask me before missing me, because the whole of knowledge of the past, present, and the future is with me."

We bear witness that you really have the divine knowledge, and O you the rightful one, your tongue is right and you have never lied!

Further, Ibn Ḥammād says:

مَنْ قَالَ بِالْبَصْرَةِ لِلنَّاسِ سَلُونِي مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ أَهْدِيَنَّ طَرِيقَ السَّمَاءِ.

"[Ali is the one] who said to the people in Basra: 'Do ask me about the course of Heaven before missing me!'"

Zayd Marzūki says:

مَدِينَةُ الْعِلْمِ عَلَى بَابِهَا وَكُلُّ مَنْ خَالَفَ عَنِ الْبَابِ جَهْلٌ 1
أَمْ هَلْ تَسْمَعُونَ قَوْلَهُ مِنْ كَذَا: سَأَلُونِي قَبْلَ إِدْرَاكِ الْأَجَلِ 2

For the city of knowledge Ali is a gate, and whoever distances himself from this gate is ignorant,
Have you heard any orator before him say: "Do ask me before my death"?

Another poet has said:

قَالَ: أَسْأَلُونِي قَبْلَ نَكْثِي وَذَا لَيْلَتِهِ عَنْ عِلْمِهِ الْبَاطِلِ 1
لَوْ شِئْتُ أَخْبَرْتُكُمْ قَدْ مَضَى وَمَا يَبْقَى فِي الزَّمَنِ الْقَابِلِ 2 297

1. Ali said: "Ask me before missing me; and this is removing the veil away from the clear knowledge,
2. "If you wanted to know, I would tell you all about the dead, and those who will come in the future."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb also narrates from Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān, from Ḍahḥāk, from Ibn ʿAbbās about the meaning of the verse:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ. 298

...indeed those of His obedient worshippers be wary of God (35:28). It is narrated that he said:

كُنْ عَلَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَخْشَى اللَّهَ وَيُطِيعُهُ وَيُجَاهِدُ فِي سَبِيلِهِ

"Ali was wary God; he was cautious and acted upon His command and struggled in His path."

Kalbī, in his book *Iḥān wa Miḥān*, from Abu Ṣāliḥ, from Ṣafwānī, from Ibn ʿAbbās, has narrated that:

هم، اسم من استأوى الله عسى، علم على سق كل جماعة ومعالى عن كل فرقة 299

The word

ع

is a noun and is one of God's names, and the term

عسى

means that the knowledge of Ali takes precedence over every kind of knowledge any tribe and nation had.

Zāhī, in describing Ali's knowledge, says:

مَا زِلْتُ بِتَدْرُسِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ مُتَقَرِّدًا بِحَرَائِفِضٍ عَلَى الْوُزَادِ زُخْرُهُ
أَمْوَاجُهُ الْعِلْمُ وَالْأَثَرُ هُنَا نَجْمُهُ وَالْحِلْمُ شَطَاؤُهُ وَالْقُوَى جَوَاهِرُهُ³⁰⁰

1. You [Ali] alone have been like a sea full of knowledge after the demise of the Prophet of God and poured your blessing and knowledge upon the seekers of knowledge,
2. The waves of this sea are your knowledge, the clear proofs [of yours] are its breeze, its beach is your tolerance, and its jewels are your piety.

In any case, the things that have been attributed to him, such as divine knowledge, sublime knowledge, the oneness of his excellency's truthfulness, piety, revelation of secrets, the secret of the astonishing world—whether in *Nahj al-Balāghah* or in any other books—are so many that an ordinary person could not count them, but here we briefly address some of them.

First of all there is the hadith of Dhī'labb that Shaykh Ṣadūq has narrated from Ahmad Ibn Hasan Ibn Qaṭṭān and Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Imrān Daqqāq. Then these two have narrated from Ahmad Ibn Yaḥyā Ibn Zakariyyā Qaṭṭān, and they from Muhammad Ibn ʿAbbās, who has narrated from Muhammad Ibn Abi al-Sarrā, from Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Yūnus, from Saʿd Kinānī, and finally from Aṣḥbagh Ibn Nubātah:

When Ali took the caliphate and people swore allegiance to him, he wore the clothes of the Prophet, his turban on his head and his mantle on his shoulder. While hanging his sword on his belt, he wore his sandals and set out for the mosque. Soon after entering the mosque, he climbed the pulpit and sat on the top step; after a short pause, he began addressing the gathering in this way:

يَا مَعْشَرَ النَّاسِ، سَلَوْنِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقْعُدُونِي هَذَا سَقَطَ الْعِلْمُ، هَذَا لَعَابُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ هَذَا مَا زَفَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ زَقَا زَقًا. سَلَوْنِي فَإِنْ عِنْدِي عِلْمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ. أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَوْ كُنْتُ لِي الْوِسَادَةُ بَلَّغْتُ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَقِيْتُ أَهْلَ الْوَرَاةِ بِتَوَاتُرِهِمْ حَتَّى تَطْلُقَ الْوَرَاةُ كَقَوْلِي: صَدَقَ عَلِيٌّ، مَا كَذَبَ. لَقَدْ أَهْلَاكُمْ بِمَا نَزَلَ اللَّهُ فِي.

وَأَقْبَبْتُ أَهْلَ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِإِنْجِيلِهِمْ حَتَّى يَنْطَلِقَ الْإِنْجِيلُ فَيَقُولَ: صَدَقَ عَلِيٌّ، مَا كَذَبَ، لَقَدْ أَكَلَكُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ.

وَأَقْبَبْتُ أَهْلَ الْقُرْآنِ بِقُرْآنِهِمْ حَتَّى يَنْطَلِقَ الْقُرْآنُ فَيَقُولَ: صَدَقَ عَلِيٌّ، مَا كَذَبَ، لَقَدْ أَكَلَكُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ، وَأَنْتُمْ تَقْلُونَ الْقُرْآنَ لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا³⁰¹ فَهَلْ فِيكُمْ أَحَدٌ يَعْلَمُ مَا أَنْزَلَ فِيهِ؟

وَلَوْلَا آيَةٌ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لَأَخْبَرْتُكُمْ بِمَا كَلَنْ وَبِمَا يَكُونُ وَمَا هُوَ كَلِّئٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ وَهِيَ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ: *يُخَوِّدُ اللَّهُ مَا بَشَاءُ وَفِيَتْ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ* (13:39)

O you the community of the people, do ask me [whatever you want] before missing me. This basket [chest] of mine is full of knowledge that passed to me from [the saliva of] the Prophet of God. This saliva is similar to a bird feeding its chick by putting seeds one by one in its mouth. The Prophet did the same with me when passing his knowledge to me. Do ask me before I pass away; ask about the past ones and of those who are going to come after us!

By God, if I obtain the government and have the authority to judge, and then people refer to me for their needs and demands, I will judge the people of the Torah with their own Book, the Torah, and if the Torah had the chance to speak, it would say: "Ali speaks the truth; he does not lie! He has judged among you according to the commands of God." I will judge among the people of the Bible by the commands of the Bible, and if the Bible had the chance to speak, it would say: "Ali speaks the truth; he does not lie! He certainly judges among you what is written in my pages!"

And I will judge among the people of the Qur'an by means of their Qur'an, and if the Qur'an had the chance to speak, it would say: "Ali speaks the truth; he does not lie! He has judged among you according the commands of God."

You recite the Qur'an during the day and late at night (the Qur'an is a Book that you know well and that you need), so is there among you someone who knows what God has revealed to him in that Book?

If there were only this one verse in the Qur'an, I would certainly let you know all about the past, the present, and the future, and the verse is: *God erases whatsoever He will, and He establishes [what He desires], and with Him is the Source of the Book, and the Umm al-Kitāb is with God.*

قَالَ: سَأَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْقُضُونِي، فَوَاللَّهِ الَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَرَأَى النَّسَمَةَ تَوَاقَّسُونِي عَنْ
لَهْفَةٍ فِي لَيْلٍ أُنْزِلَتْ أَوْ فِي نَهَارٍ أُنْزِلَتْ؟ عَنْكِمَا وَمَدِينِهَا؟ عَنْكِمَا وَحَضْرِيهَا؟ عَنْكِمَا وَ
مَسْجِدِهَا؟ عَنْكِمَا وَمُتَشَابِهِيهَا؟ وَأَوَّلِيهَا وَتَتْرِكُهَا؟ لَا أَخْبِرُكُمْ.

He then said:

Do ask me [any question you do not know the answer to] before missing me, by God, Who splits the seeds [under the soil] and creates souls; if you ask me about the Qur'an verse by verse, whether it has been sent down in the middle of the day or at night, which verse was revealed in Mecca, and which verse was revealed in Medina; which of the verses was revealed on the journey, and which one was sent down at home; which verse has been abrogated and which one is decisive; no matter what question you ask me, I will give you the correct answer to it.

هَاجَمَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ يَقُولُ: ذِغْلِبُ، ذَرِبَ النَّسَمَ، يَلْبَسُ فِي الْمُطْبِ، مُجَاعُ الْقَلْبِ، قَالَ: قَدْ
أَزَقْنِي أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ بِمِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُ، لَا تَجْعَلْهُ الْيَوْمَ لَكُمْ فِي مَسْأَلِي لَهَامَ

At that moment, a man, who was called Dhi'lab, who had an unruly tongue in lecturing, stood up in front of him and said: "The son of Abi Tālib has climbed the pulpit that is too much for him. So today I am going to ask him a difficult question to put him to shame in answering it!" So he asked: "O you Master of the Faithful, have you ever seen your Creator?"

قَالَ: وَمَنْ لَكَ، لَمْ تَرَ الصُّيُونَ بِمَشَاهِدِ الْأَبْصَارِ وَلَكِنْ رَأَيْتَهُ الْهَلُوبُ بِمَحَافِي الْإِيمَانِ. وَمَنْ لَكَ بِ
ذِغْلِبِ إِنْ رَبِّي لَا يَوْصَفُ بِالْحَمْدِ وَلَا بِالْحَرَكَةِ، وَلَا بِالشُّكُونِ، وَلَا بِالْيَمَامِ قِيَامِ الْإِصْبَافِ، وَلَا
بِحِمَّةٍ وَلَا بِدَقَابٍ، لَطِيفُ الْكَلَامَةِ لَا يَوْصَفُ بِاللُّغَفِ، عَظِيمُ الصَّلَاحَةِ لَا يَوْصَفُ بِالضَّلَمِ، كَبِيرُ
الْعُكْبَرِ لَا يَوْصَفُ بِالْكِبَرِ، جَلِيلُ الْجَلَالَةِ لَا يَوْصَفُ بِالْجَلْبِطِ، رُؤُوفُ الرَّحْمَةِ لَا يَوْصَفُ
بِالرَّقَةِ،³⁰² مُؤْمِنٌ لَا يَهْتَدِي مَذْهَبُكَ لَا يَهْتَدِي، قَاتِلٌ لَا يَلْفِظُ. هُوَ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ عَلَى غَيْرِ مَلَزَمَةٍ،
خَارِجٌ مِنْهَا عَلَى غَيْرِ مُتَابَعَةٍ، فَوْقَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَا يَقَالُ: شَيْءٌ قَوْفُهُ، وَأَمَامَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَا يَقَالُ: لَهُ
أَمَامٌ دَاخِلٌ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ لَا كَتَفٌ فِي شَيْءٍ دَاخِلٍ، وَخَارِجٌ مِنْهَا لَا كَتَفٌ فِي شَيْءٍ وَخَارِجٌ
فَوْقَ دَعْلَبٍ مُتَشَابِهٍ عَلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: فَكُلُّهُ مَا تَمَيَّنْتُ بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْجَوَابِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَخْذُلُنِي فِي مِثْلِهِ.

Imam Ali said:

Woe upon you, O Dhi'lalab, vision by means of the eyes cannot see God; however, hearts can feel Him by sincere belief. Woe upon you, O Dhi'lalab, the truthfulness of the Creator cannot be measured by attributions of distance and closeness (and you cannot say He is far away). Nor can He be attributed with motion and stagnation (and you cannot say He moves or stands). He is so fair that He has created fairness, so it cannot be said: "He is Fair." And in greatness He is so great that has created greatness (so you cannot say: "He is Great"). And in Loftiness, He is so Lofty that He creates the Lofty (so it cannot be said: "He is Lofty"). And in Majesty He is so Majestic that He creates the essence of Majesty, so is He the essence of Mercy and Kindness; He is Aware of His creatures without seeing or touching them, because He has created them and knows all their qualities. He speaks, but not by means of tongue and speech. God is with things and beings, but without mixing with them (otherwise the Creator and the creatures would become intermixed). And He is separate from the whole of being without disconnecting from it (so that there is a gap between them). God is above everything, so it cannot be said that there is something above Him. And He is in before and next to everything, but it cannot be said there is something in front of Him. God is within every single being, but not physically, and He is outside of everything, but we are not to imagine that He is disconnected from it.

When Dhi'lalab heard what he said, he became dizzy and fell to the ground and then said: "By God, I have never heard such an answer to my question before. And by God, I will never try Ali by asking him similar questions."

After this event, Imam Ali said: "O people! Now, do ask me any question you desire before missing me."

Ash'ath Ibn Qays stood up and said: "O Master of the Faithful, how do I collect taxes from the Zoroastrians, when they do not have a messenger and no Book has been revealed for them?"

Ali said:

Yes, O Ash'ath, God has revealed a Book for them, and He has raised a messenger among them. Life was routine year by year, until one night, one of their kings drank too much and got intoxicated. In that state, he invited his daughter into his bed, and he had an illicit affair with her. In the morning some of his tribe got to know what dreadful thing had happened. Therefore, all of them gathered in front of the king's court and cried out: "See, you have defiled our

religion and ruined it. Now come out—we want to purify you by lashing you; we are going to fulfil the command of God.”

The king called back: “Let all of you, the whole nation, come together and listen to what I am going to tell you, and then if I can prove my innocence, leave me alone; otherwise do whatever you want to.”

The people gathered in one place and the king told them: “Do you know that God has not created anyone dearer than our father, Adam, and our mother, Eve?” The people agreed, and unanimously said: “Yes, you are right.” Then the king said: “Now, tell me, did Adam not marry his daughters to his sons and his sons to his daughters?” They said: “O King, you are right, he did, and the true religion is that which you are telling us now. There is no problem in it; there is no issue in such marrying!” Since then, the people made a contract with the king that such a marriage could be lawful and everyone could marry his sister and daughter according to his will.³⁰³

On this basis, God erased the light of knowledge from their chests and took away His Book from among them. Therefore the Zoroastrian or the Majūs is of those unbelievers who will be taken to Hell without being questioned; and the situation of the hypocrites is worse than theirs is.

Ash‘ath said: “By God, I had never heard such an answer before. I swear that I will never try Ali any more, and never again will I ask him such a question!”

Nevertheless Ali again said to the crowd: “Do ask me more before missing me.” A man at the far end of the mosque stood up, and resting his hand on his hand-stick, walked slowly from among the people towards the pulpit to Ali. When he reached him, he said: “O Master of the Faithful, please advise and guide me to do a desirable action by which to be saved from the fire of Hell.”

قَالَ لَهُ: اسْمَعْ يَا هَذَا أَمْ أَفْتَمِ اسْتَيْقِنْ. قَامَتِ الدُّنْيَا بِثَلَاثَةِ: بِأَلِيٍّ مُسْتَعْمِلٍ لِمِلَّةِهِ، وَبِعَنَى لَا يَجْعَلُ
بِمَالِهِ عَلَى أَهْلِ دِينِ اللَّهِ، وَبِفَقِيرٍ صَابِرٍ. فَإِذَا كُنتُمُ الْعَالِيَةَ عَلِمْتُمْ، وَبِمَعْلُومِ النَّبِيِّ، وَلَوْ سَبَّ الْقَبِيرُ،
فَيَنْتَهَى الْوَيْلُ وَالْثُبُورُ، وَعِنْدَهَا يَغْرِثُ الْعَارِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ النَّارَ قَدْ رَجَتْ إِلَى يَدَيْهَا، أَيْ
الْكُفْرِ بِعَدَالَةِ الْإِيمَانِ

أَيُّهَا السَّائِلُ، فَلَا تَتَرَنَّ بِمَكْشَرَةِ الْمَسْجِدِ وَجَمَاعَةِ أَقْوَامٍ اجْتَمَعُوا بِمَجْلِسَةٍ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ نَقَتْ. أَيُّهَا السَّائِلُ، إِنَّمَا الْكُلُّ ثَلَاثَةٌ: زَاهِدٌ وَفَاضِلٌ وَصَابِرٌ. فَإِنَّمَا الزَّاهِدُ فَلَا يَفْرَحُ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا تَأْتِيهِ وَلَا يَمُوتُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا تَذْهَبُ. وَأَمَّا الْفَاضِلُ فَيَتَمَلَّكُهَا بِقَلْبِهِ، كَلَّا أَنْزَلَ مِنْهَا فِتْنًا صَرَفَتْ عَنْهَا نَفْسَهُ لَا يَنْتَفِعُ مِنْ سُوءِ عَالَمٍ وَلَا مِنْ إِعْطَاءِ الزَّاهِدِ. فَكَلَّا يَا بَنِي جَلٍّ أَصَابَهَا أَنْ يَنْتَفِعُ مِنْ حَرَامٍ.

Imam Ali said to him:

O man, listen! And try to understand it and then believe it. The world is set up upon three principles: a learned man who puts his knowledge into circulation, a rich man who is not mean in giving his money to the believers in the way of God, and a poor man who is patient. It means, if a learned man hides his knowledge, a rich man is stingy, and a poor man is impatient, then evil and corruption dominate the society, mortality threatens the human race, and it is as the sages and those closer to God know, that the world reverts back to what it was right in the beginning!

O you the questioner! Let not the people's gathering in the mosques, who come together to pray and listen to the sermons, beguile you. It is just their bodies you see; their souls are after something evil outside of the mosque! O man, people have been divided into three groups: blind to the world, fond of this world, and patient against desires. Therefore, the sign of one blind to the world is that he does not become happy because of anything that comes to him from this world, nor does he get upset because of whatever he loses. The sign of a patient man is that he likes this world and living in it and whatever he sees around him, but he avoids allowing his soul to lure him into benefitting from it—he is aware of its evil ending. However, the sign of one who desires this world is that he does not care whether his hunt is lawful or unlawful; he is only in pursuit of increasing his wealth!

The questioner asked: "O the Master of the Faithful, what is the duty of a pious man then?" He answered:

يَنْظُرُ إِلَى مَا أَوْجَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ حَقٍّ فَيَتَوَلَّاهُ وَيَنْظُرُ إِلَى مَا حَقَّقَهُ فَيُبْرَأُ مِنْهُ وَإِنْ كُنَّ حِيَامًا قَرِيبًا.

"The sign and duty of a pious man is to consider what God has allowed him as lawful, to guard the rights God has endowed him with, and in the meantime, to consider those who are against the commands of God and opposed to His Guardianship [i.e. Ali's]; he keeps away from them even if they are his closest friends and relatives."

The man said: "O Master of the Faithful, by God, you have spoken the truth." After that, he disappeared. Aṣḡagh Ibn Nubāṭah, the narrator of this ḥadīth, says: "No matter how much the gathered people tried to find him, they did not succeed."

Imam Ali smiled while still sitting on the pulpit and said: "Who are you looking for? This man was my brother, Elias."³⁰⁴

On a similar occasion, Imam Ali again said:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقْعِدُونِي

"Do ask me [whatever you want] before missing me." To his question there was no answer, so he recited the praises of God, and sent his blessings upon the Prophet and his descendants and then turned to Imam Hasan, saying:

يَا حَسَنُ قُمْ فَاصْطِدِ النَّبِيَّ فَكَلِّمْهُمْ بِكَلَامِ لَا تُجْهَلُكَ قُرَيْشٌ مِنْ يَدَيَّ يَقُولُونَ: إِنَّ الْحَسَنَ
بْنَ عَلِيٍّ لَا يَخْبِرُنِي شَيْئًا.

"O Hasan, stand up and climb the pulpit for a sermon so that the Quraysh get to know [your talent], and after my demise do not say that Hasan knew nothing!"

Hasan said: "O Father, how can I climb the pulpit and give a sermon while you are among the people and hear what I say!" Imam Ali told him: "May my father and mother be made a sacrifice to you, I will hide myself somewhere so that I am not seen, but I only see you giving the sermon."

Imam Hasan climbed the pulpit and first recited the praises of God in the best way, and sent his sincere peace and blessings upon the Prophet and his descendants. And then he continued:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، سَمِعْتُ جَدِّي رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: أَنَا عِدَّةُ الْعِلْمِ وَعَلِيٌّ بَابُهَا، وَهَلْ
تَدْخُلُ الْمَدِينَةَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَابِهَا؟

"O people! I heard my grandfather, the Prophet of God, upon him be peace and blessing, saying: 'I am the City of knowledge, and Ali is its gate.' Now is it wise to enter the city but not through its gate?"

He said that much and descended the pulpit. Ali also hastened to him and embraced him, and then said to Imam Husayn: "O my beloved son, now you climb the pulpit for a sermon so that the Quraysh get to know [your talent], and after my demise, do not say that Husayn knew nothing! Remember that your sermon must be the continuation of your brother's sermon."

Imam Husayn climbed the pulpit and first recited the praises of God in the best way, and sent his sincere peace and blessings upon the Prophet and his descendants, and then said:

مَتَافِرُ الْقَاسِ، تَمِثُّ جَدِّي رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ عَلِيًّا هُوَ مَدِينَةُ هُدًى،
فَمَنْ دَخَلَهَا نَجَّى، وَمَنْ تَخَلَّفَ عَنْهَا هَلَكَ.

"O you the community of the people! I heard my grandfather, the Prophet of God, upon him be peace and blessing, saying: 'Indeed Ali is a vast city of guidance; whoever enters this city is secured, and he who avoids it perishes.'"

Ali also moved towards him, embraced him, and gave him kisses, and then turned to the people saying:

مَتَافِرُ الْقَاسِ، افْتَدُوا إِلَهُنَا فَزَارَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَوَدَّ بَنَاتِي اسْتَوْدِعْنِي وَأَنَا
اسْتَوْدِعُكُمْوهَا مَتَافِرُ الْقَاسِ، وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَاتِلُكُمْ عَنْهَا.³⁰⁵

"O the community of the people! Bear witness that these two little children of the Prophet of God are entrusted to me, and I am going to leave them with you. O you, the community of the people! The Prophet of God will ask you [to know what you did] about them."

The second one is Dhi'lab's hadith that Shaykh Ṣadūq has narrated from Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Imrān Daqqāq, Muhammad Ibn Abi Abdullah Kūfī, Muhammad Ibn Ismā'īl Barmakī, Husayn Ibn Hasan, Abdullah Ibn Dāhir, Husayn Ibn Yahyā Kūfī, Quthm Ibn Qutādah, and Abdullah Ibn Yūsuf, from Imam Husayn, that states:

يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يُخْطَبُ عَلَى مِثَرِ الْكُوفَةِ، إِذْ قَامَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ يَقَالُ لَهُ: ذَعْلَبُ ذِرْبِ
الْبَاسِ، تَلِيغُ فِي الْخُطَابِ، تُجَاغِ الْقُلُوبَ هَلَّا: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، هَلْ رَأَيْتَ رَبَّكَ؟

When Imam Ali was on the pulpit of Kūfa Mosque and giving a sermon to the audience, a man called Dhi'lab, who was famous for his sharp words and sarcastic way of speaking, stood up in front of him and said: "O Master of the Faithful, have you ever seen your Creator?" He answered him:

وَلَيْكَ يَا ذَعْلَبُ مَا كُنْتُ أَعْبُدُ إِلَّا رَبَّهُ

"Woe upon you, O Dhi'lab; I am not such a man to pray to my Creator without seeing Him!" The man said: "So let us know how you have seen Him!"

He answered:

وَمَلَكَ بِإِذْغَلَبَ لَزْزَةً الصُّيُوفُ بِمُحَادَّةِ الْأَهْصَارِ وَلَحِكَنَ رَأْنُهُ الْقُلُوبَ بِمُخَاتَبِ الْإِيمَانِ
وَمَلَكَ بِإِذْغَلَبَ إِنْ رَمَى لَطِيفُ الْمُسَافَةِ فَلَا يَوْصَفُ بِالطُّغْيَانِ عَظِيمِ الْمَطْمَئَةِ لَا يَوْصَفُ
بِالْعِظَمِ كَبِيرِ الْعِصْيَانِ لَا يَوْصَفُ بِالْكِبَرِ جَلِيلِ الْجَلَالَةِ لَا يَوْصَفُ بِالْفَيْلِظِ
قَبْلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَلَا يَقَالُ شَيْءٌ قَبْلَهُ وَتَدَكُّلُ شَيْءٍ فَلَا يَقَالُ شَيْءٌ يَتَدَكُّلُ شَيْءٍ فَلَا يَقَالُ شَيْءٌ يَتَدَكُّلُ شَيْءٍ
بِهَيْئَةِ ذَوَالِ لَا يَجْدِيهِ هُوَ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ كَيْفَا غَيْرِ مُتَقَلِّجٍ بِهَا وَلَا يَهْتَنُ عَنْهَا ظَلِيمٌ لَا يَتَوَلَّى
الْمُتَاسَرَّةَ مُتَقَبِّلٌ لَا يَسْتَحْلِلُ رُفْقَةَ بَاطِنٍ لَا يَسْتَفِئُ قَرِيبٌ لَا يُمْدَدُهَا لَطِيفٌ لَا يَنْبَغِشُ مُتَوَجِّدٌ
لَا يَهْتَدِ عَدَمٌ فَكَيْلٌ لَا يَاضِلُ رَاقٍ مُتَقَدِّرٌ لَا يَحْرُكُهُ مُرِيدٌ لَا يَهْتَمُّهُ سَمِيعٌ لَا يَأْتُهُ بِصِيرٌ لَا يَهْدَاهُ
لَا تُغْوِيهِ الْأَمَاسِكُنُ وَلَا تُصَحِّهُ الْأَوْكَاثُ وَلَا تُحْمِلُ الضَّفَلَتُ وَلَا تَأْخُذُهُ السَّنَاقُ
سَقَى الْأَوْكَاثُ كَوْنَهُ وَالْعَدَمُ وَجُودَهُ وَالْأَبْدَاءُ أَرْزَلُهُ بِتَفْصِيلِ الْمُتَاسِرِ عَرِفَتْ أَنْ لَا تَمُتَرَ
لَهُ وَبِصِيرِهِ الْفُجُورِ عَرِفَتْ أَنْ لَا يَجُورُهُ وَبِخُلَاقِهِ بَيْنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ عَرِفَتْ أَنْ لَا يَجْدُلُهُ
بِمُخَاتَبَتِهِ بَيْنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ عَرِفَتْ أَنْ لَا يَفِينُ لَهُ

خَلَقَ الثَّوْبَ بِالطَّلَمَةِ وَالْجَسَدَ بِالْهَلَلِ الشَّرْدَ بِالْمَرْوَةِ مَوَلَّتْ بَيْنَ مُتَحَلِّقَاتِهَا مُفَرَّقَ بَيْنَ
مُتَدَانِيَاتِهَا دَالَّةٌ بِتَفْرِيقِهَا عَلَى مُفَرَّقَاتِهَا وَتَأْلِيفِهَا عَلَى مَوَلَّتَاتِهَا وَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «وَمِنْ
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ» (51:49) فَفَرَّقَ بَيْنَ قَبْلِ وَتَدَايِلِهَا أَنْ لَا
قَبْلَ لَهُ وَلَا يَهْتَدِ قَامِدُهُ بِغَيْرِهَا عَلَى أَنْ لَا غَيْرَ لَهَا لَمَرْزُهَا مُخْبِرَةٌ بِتَوَقُّفِهَا أَنْ لَا وَفَتْ لَوَقَّتِهَا
تَحَبُّبَ تَعَمُّدِهَا عَنْ تَعَمُّدِهَا لَعَلَّهَا أَنْ لَا يَحْجَابَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ خَلْقِهِ غَيْرُ خَلْقِهِ كُلِّهَا إِذَا لَا مَرْغُوبٌ وَ

إِلْمَا إِذَا مَا لَوْهُ وَعَالِمًا إِذَا لَا مَلُومٌ وَتَوَحُّدًا إِذَا لَا مُتَمَوِّجٌ ثُمَّ انْشَأَ يَقُولُ:

وَلَوْ نَزَلَ سَيِّدِي بِالْمَعْدَمِ مَعْرُوفًا وَلَوْ نَزَلَ سَيِّدِي بِالْجُودِ مَوْصُوفًا 1

وَكُنْتُ إِذَا لَيْسَ نُوْرٌ يَنْشَاءُ بِهِ وَلَا ظِلَالٌ عَلَى الْأَفَاقِ مَكْشُوفًا 2

وَرَبِّي بِجَلَالِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ وَكُلِّ مَا كُنَّ فِي الْأَوْهَامِ مَوْصُوفًا 3

فَقَرَّبَهُ عَلَى الشَّمْسِ بِمِثْلِهِ يَرْجِعُ أَخَا حَسْبِ الْفَجْرِ مَكْشُوفًا 4

وَفِي الْمَارِجِ يَلْقَى تَوَجُّجَ قُدْرَتِهِ مُوْجًا يَخَارِضُ حُرْفَ الرُّوحِ مَكْشُوفًا 5

فَكُنْتُ أَخَا جَدَلٍ فِي الدُّنْيَا مُنْتَقِمًا قَدْ بَلَّغْتُ الشُّكَّ فِيهِ الرَّأْيَ مَلُوفًا 6

وَاصْبَحَ أَخَا قَنَاقَةِ خَالِ السَّيْلِ وَالصَّكْرَاتِ مِنْ مَوْلَاهُ مَحْصُوفًا 7

أَمْسَى دَلِيلَ الْهَدْيِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُتَشِيرًا وَفِي السَّمَاءِ جَمِيلَ الْخَلِّ مَعْرُوفًا 8

Woe on you O Dhi'lab! Your ordinary eyes cannot see Him, but hearts with right belief can see Him. Woe on you, O Dhi'lab, indeed my Creator in fairness is the Fair of the fairs (that is, He is the source of fairness), so you shouldn't say He is Fair, for He is beyond being Fair; He is the Creator of the source of Fairness! And in the attribution of greatness, my Creator is the Greatest of the greater (that is, His relation to the attribution of Greatness is beyond imagination)! So He shouldn't be addressed as Great, Greater, or even the Greatest; He is the initiator of such attributions. In such attributions, my Creator's Greatness is beyond the attribution of the greatest! He must not be given such attributes, because he is the Creator of the greatness, that is, His Majesty is above such praiseworthy superlative adjectives.

My Creator existed before anything you can imagine, and it cannot be said that anything existed before Him; He is everlasting, and it cannot be said that there will be anything after Him! He created everything with His will without receiving any help from anyone. Whatever He will, it will happen with no trial. He is within everything, all being, without mixing with them, and without being separated from them. He is apparent but not touchable. He is Light, bright and illuminating, but not seen by these [physical] visions of creatures. He is far away, but not by distance, and is near, but not by place or feeling. He is Fair but not the fairness of things. He exists but did not come into existence. He is the Active and the Measurer of the whole of existent beings but not through movement. He wills, but not through preparation and far-sight. He hears, but not by means of physical ears, and He sees but not by means of physical eyes. All places cannot embrace Him; time and place cannot accompany Him. Attributes like power, knowledge, goodness, benevolence, and many other attributes cannot limit Him. Never does slumber overtake Him or reduce His Awareness!

His real existence dominates time and eras; His being is prior to His nonexistence. He is the creator of the external senses, and intelligence proves that He is free from such senses. Since He created the essence of nature and all beings, it proves that He Himself is void of all. As He is the agent for creating contraries between things, He cannot have any contrary in Him. Since He created resembling forms like each other, it proves that He has nothing like Him.

My Creator has set up oppositions between light and darkness, dryness and wetness, cold and hot.³⁰⁶

My Creator has settled friendship between the whole of creation, and on the other hand, brought distance and separation among similar beings! It is a natural distance between them; it is by the Creator,

according to how He has created them. Those contrary things, because of their closeness to each other, have a relationship with their Creator, so their nearness is due to their nature and willingness. This is the meaning of the following statement of God: "And We created of everything a pair so that you may remember your Creator, (and come to know that this great world has been created by male and female and all are within His control)."307

My Creator, by means of these same and different things, and their contrariness, set up a separation between those who were created before and those who came as the later generation, so as to know that God is everlasting; He has no beginning or ending, and there was not anything before Him, nor will there be anything after Him. All these beings that have their own senses and attributes that Allah has allowed them to have are the correct proof and stand as witness of God Who has given them such instincts. He Himself is void of such instincts (i.e., He is the Creator of instincts, the instinct-creator). And all these vastly spread-out things, all have been created in time and duration, and represent that the very Creator Who has appointed for them a certain time to grow, has not allocated time for Himself. My Creator has kept some of the plants unveiled from some others so as to prove there is no veil between Him and His creations (unless the sole nature of every plant is a veil for it). My Creator was the Lord, Master, and Creator even before He started creation. He was the object of worship even when there was no one to worship; and He was the Hearer even before there was something to be heard.

1. Always and constantly is my Master the object to be worshiped and known and to be prayed to; and He is attributed with His forgiveness and Mercifulness.
2. O my Creator, there was only You when there was even no light to be benefitted, and when there was no darkness to encircle the entire non-existence!
3. And our Creator is contrary to all creatures, and He is different from all thoughts, imaginations, and attributes.
4. And whoever wants to make Him similar to something, his chest shrinks, his breath is cut, and his hands remain fettered with ignorance
5. The height of His knowledge is so great that it blinds the vision of the spirit and rational soul.
6. Therefore, keep away from one who disputes about Him; he is abnormal, his soul is contaminated, and his thoughts are defective and doubtful.
- 7 Keep companionship with the one whom you trust, for the sake of friendship and affection you have for his Master, the

Almighty God; the one who is always protected by the blessing coming from his Lord to him;

8 He is the one who passes his day among the people to guide them, and he has a good rank and position in Heaven.

When Dhiflab heard what his Excellency said, he was shocked and fell to the ground, and then said: "By God, I have never heard such an answer to my question before, and by God, I will never try Ali again by asking him similar questions!"

Here, the late Ṣadūq—Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Husayn Ibn Bābwayh Qumi—says the author of this book said: "There are some sentences and phrases in this hadith that Imam Riḍā has mentioned in his sermon, and it confirms our saying about the Imams that each one of them had received his knowledge from his father until [the chain reaches] the first one, who received it from the Prophet."³⁰⁸

The third one is the first sermon of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يُلَاحُظُ مِنْ حُجَّةٍ الْقَاتِلُونَ، وَلَا يَحْصِي نِعْمَاءَهُ الْخَالِدُونَ، وَلَا يُوَدِّي حُكْمَهُ
الْمُتَحَمِّلُونَ، الَّذِي لَا يَمُرُّ بِكَ هَذَا الْمِثْمُ، وَلَا يَأْتِيهِ غَوْصُ الْفِكْرِ، الَّذِي لَيْسَ لِيَنْفِيهِ عَنْهُ مَحْذُودٌ وَ
لَا تَنْتُ تَوْجُودٌ، وَلَا وَقْتُ تَعْلُودٌ، وَلَا أَجَلٌ تَمُودٌ، فَكُلُّ الْخَلْقِ بِيَقْدَرِهِ وَتَحْتَ رِجَالِهِ بِرَحْمَتِهِ وَ
وَقْدِ الصُّحُورِ مَيِّدَانِ أَرْضِهِ
أَوَّلُ الدِّينِ تَعْرِيفُهُ وَكَمَالُ تَعْرِيفِهِ التَّصَدُّقُ بِهِ، وَكَمَالُ التَّصَدُّقِ بِهِ تَوْجِيْدُهُ وَكَمَالُ تَوْجِيْدِهِ
الْإِخْلَاصُ لَهُ، وَكَمَالُ الْإِخْلَاصِ لَهُ نَقْيُ الصِّفَاتِ عَنْهُ لِشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ صِفَةٍ أَلَهَا غَيْرُ الْمَوْصُوفِ، وَ
شَهَادَةِ كُلِّ مَوْصُوفٍ أَنَّهُ غَيْرُ الصِّفَةِ
فَمَنْ وَصَفَ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ هَذَا قَوْلُهُ، وَمَنْ هَذَا ثَمَاءٌ، وَمَنْ ثَمَاءٌ هَذَا جَزَاءٌ، وَمَنْ جَزَاءٌ هَذَا جَوْلَةٌ، وَمَنْ
جَوْلَةٌ هَذَا أَشَارٌ إِلَيْهِ هَذَا حَرْفٌ، وَمَنْ حَرْفٌ هَذَا عِلْفٌ، وَمَنْ عِلْفٌ فِيمَ؟ هَذَا ضَمْنَةٌ، وَمَنْ قَلْبٌ: عَلَامٌ؟
هَذَا خَلْقٌ مِنْهُ
كُلُّ مَنْ لَا عَنْ حَدِيثٍ، تَوْجُودٌ لَا عَنْ عَدَمٍ، مَعَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا يَمُازِنُهُ، وَغَيْرُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا يَمُازِلُهُ، فَاعِلٌ
لَا يَمْتَقِي الْحَرَكَاتِ وَالْأَلْفَ، بِهَيْمٍ إِذَا لَا تَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ مَنْ خَلَقَهُ، تَوْجُودٌ إِذَا لَا تَسْكُنُ تَنْطَلِسُ بِهِ وَلَا
يَسْتَوْجِسُ لِقَعْدِهِ³⁰⁹

Praise is due to God Whose worthiness cannot be described by speakers, Whose bounties cannot be counted by calculators, and Whose claim (to

obedience) cannot be satisfied by those who attempt to do so, Whom the height of intellectual courage cannot appreciate, and the depth of understanding cannot reach; He for Whose description no limit has been laid down, no eulogy exists, no time is ordained, and no duration is fixed. He brought forth creation through His Omnipotence, dispersed winds through His Compassion, and made firm the shaking earth with rocks.

The foremost act of religion is the acknowledgement of Him, the perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify to Him, the perfection of testifying to Him is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him as Pure, and the perfection of His Purity is to deny His attributes, because every attribute is a proof that it is different from that to which it is attributed, and everything to which something is attributed is different from the attribute.

Thus whoever assigns attributes to God recognizes His like; and whoever recognizes His like regards Him as two; and whoever regards Him as two recognizes parts for Him; and whoever recognizes parts for Him has composed Him; and whoever composes Him has pointed at Him; and whoever has pointed at Him has admitted limitations for Him; and whoever has admitted limitations for Him has numbered Him. Whoever says: "In what is He?" has held that He is contained; and whoever says: "On what is He?" has held He is infused with something else.

He is a Being, but not through the phenomenon of coming into being. He exists, but not from non-existence. He is with everything, but not in physical nearness. He is different from everything, but not in physical separation. He acts, but without the necessity of movements and instruments. He sees even when there is none to be looked at from among His creation. He is only One, such that there is none with whom He may keep company or whom He may miss in his absence.

He originated creation initially and commenced it originally, without any reflection, without making use of any experiment, without innovating any movement, and without experiencing any aspiration of mind. He allotted to all things their times, put together their variations, gave them their properties, and determined their features, knowing them before creating them, realizing fully their limits and confines, and appreciating their propensities and intricacies...

The fourth one is sermon 63 from *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

المحمد لله الذي لم ينسِ لهُ حَالٌ خَالًا، فَيَكُونُ أَوْ لَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ آخِرًا. وَيَكُونُ ظَاهِرًا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ بَاطِنًا. كُلُّ مَسْمُومٍ بِالْوَحْدِ غَيْرُهُ قَلِيلٌ. وَكُلُّ عَزِيزٍ غَيْرُهُ ذَلِيلٌ. وَكُلُّ قَوِيٍّ غَيْرُهُ ضَعِيفٌ

وَكُلُّ مَالِكٍ غَيْرُهُ مَمْلُوكٌ، وَكُلُّ عَالِمٍ غَيْرُهُ مُتَعَلِّمٌ، وَكُلُّ قَادِرٍ غَيْرُهُ بِقَدِيرٌ وَبَهِيمٌ، وَكُلُّ سَمِيعٍ غَيْرُهُ يَسْمَعُ
عَنْ لَطِيفِ الْأَصَاتِ وَيَسْمَعُ كَيْفَ هَاقَ بَذَخُ عَنْهُ مَا يَتَذَمُّهَا، وَكُلُّ بَصِيرٍ غَيْرُهُ يَنْصَرُّ عَنْ خَفَى
الْأَلْوَانِ وَلَطِيفِ الْأَجْسَامِ، وَكُلُّ ظَاهِرٍ غَيْرُهُ بَاطِنٌ، وَكُلُّ بَاطِنٍ غَيْرُهُ ظَاهِرٌ
لَمْ يَخْلُقْ مَا خَلَقَهُ لِتَفْسِيدِ سُلْطَانِهِ، وَلَا تَخَوُّفٍ مِنْ عَوَاقِبِ زَمَانٍ، وَلَا اسْتِثْنَاءَ عَلَى يَدِ مُتَكَاوِبٍ، وَلَا
قَرِيبٍ مُتَكَابِرٍ وَلَا جِدٍّ مُتَنَافِرٍ، وَلَسْكَنَ خِلَافِيٍّ، مَرْزُوقُونَ وَعِيَالٌ دَائِرُونَ.
لَمْ يَخْلُقْ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ فَيْثًا لَمْ يَخْلُقْ فِيهَا كَلْبٌ، وَلَنْ تَأْتِئَهَا قِيَالٌ هُوَ مِنْهَا بَاهِلٌ، لَمْ يُوَدَّ خَلْقٌ مَا أَهْتَدَا، وَلَا
تُدِيرُ مَا ذَرَا، وَلَا وَقَفَ بِهِ عَمَّا خَلَقَ، وَلَا تَحْتِ عَلَيْهِ شُبْهَةٌ فِيمَا قَسَمَى وَقَدَّرَ، بَلْ قَسَاءٌ مُتَعَنٍّ وَعِلْمٌ
مُحْكَمٌ وَأَمْرٌ مُبْرَمٌ. الْمَأْمُولُ مَعَ التَّعَمُّ، وَالْمَرْهُوبُ مَعَ التَّعَمُّ.³¹⁰

Praise be to God Whose existence is not subject to any changes of circumstances or conditions. He was before anything came into existence and will remain after everything has come to an end. His Glory was distinctly evident even before one could realize or discern it. Any being except Him called to be as one is insignificant; and everyone enjoying honor other than Him is lowly. Every powerful person other than Him is weak. Every master (owner) other than Him is a slave (owned).

Every knower other than Him is deemed to be learned. Every controller other than Him is sometimes imbued with control and sometimes with disability. Every listener other than Him is in fact deaf, as loud voices make him deaf and distant voices also escape him. Every onlooker other than Him is blind to hidden aspects and delicate things. Every manifest thing other than Him is hidden, but every hidden thing other than Him is incapable of becoming manifest.

He did not create what He created to fortify His kingdom, nor for fear of the consequences of time, nor to seek help against the attack of an equal or a boastful partner or a hateful opponent. But they were created as beings whom He nourished, over whom He has complete control, and who are absolutely humble and weak before His power.

He does not incarnate Himself into His creatures so that it could be said that He is part of the universe or of the things created by Him, nor is He separated from anything so it could be said that He is away from it. The creation of what He initiated and the administration of what He controls did not fatigue Him. No disability overtook Him against what He created. No misgiving ever occurred to Him in what He ordained and resolved. But His verdict is certain; His knowledge is supreme; His orders are binding.

When calamities and disasters overwhelm us, we can have hope in Him only, and when we are surrounded with wealth, we must not forget His wrath.

The fifth is sermon 150 from *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الدَّالُّ عَلَى وَجُودِهِ بِخَلْقِهِ، وَبُحْتِثِ خَلْقِهِ عَلَى أَرْثِيَّتِهِ، وَبِإِسْنَاهِمُ عَلَى أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ لَهُ لَا
تُشْتَبْهُ الشَّيْءُ وَلَا تُجْهَلُ الشَّوَابِرُ، لَا فِرَاقَ الصَّانِعِ وَالْمَصْنُوعِ، وَالْمَخْلُوقِ وَالْمُخْلُوقِ، وَالرُّبِّ
الرَّؤُوبِ

الْأَحَدِ لَا يَأْوِيلُ عِنْدَهُ، وَالْمَتَّاعِي لَا يَمْتَنِي حَرَكَةً وَنَسَبَ وَالشَّيْءَ لَا يَلْذَأُ، وَالْجَبَرُ لَا يَنْفَرِقِي اللَّهَ، وَ
الْقَائِدُ لَا يَمْلِكُ، وَالْبَاقِي لَا يَرِيسُ مَسَافَةً، وَالظَّالِمُ لَا يَرْفِي، وَالْهَالِكُ لَا يَلْطَافُهُ بَأَنُ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ
بِالْقَهْرِ لَمَّْا وَالْقُدْرَةُ عَلَيْهِ. وَبَلَّتِ الْأَشْيَاءُ مِنْهُ بِالضُّعُفِ لَهُ وَالرُّجُوعُ إِلَيْهِ

مَنْ وَصَفَهُ هَذَا خَلْقٌ، وَمَنْ خَلَقَ هَذَا عَدُوٌّ، وَمَنْ عَنَى هَذَا أَنْطَلَأُ أَرْثُهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: كَيْفَ؟ هَدَى
اسْتَوْصَفَهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: أَيْنَ؟ هَذَا حَيْرَةٌ، عَلِمَ إِذْ لَا مَقْلُومٌ، وَرَبُّ إِذْ لَا مَرْيُوبٌ، وَقَدِيرٌ إِذْ لَا

مَقْلُومٌ. 311

Praise be to God Who is the proof of His existence through His creation, of His being eternal through the renewal of His creation, and through their mutual similarities, although nothing is similar to Him. Senses cannot touch Him and curtains cannot veil Him, because of the difference between the Maker and the made, the Limiter and the limited, and the Sustainer and the sustained.

He is One but not numerically. He is the Creator but not through activity or labor, is Hearer but not by means of any physical organ, is Seer but not by the stretching of the eyelids, is Witness but not by nearness, is Distanced but not by measurement of distance, is Manifest but not by seeing, and is Hidden but not by subtlety (of body). He is Distanced from things because He overpowers them and exercises might over them, while things are distanced from Him because of their subjugation to Him and their turning towards Him.

He who describes Him surely limits Him. He who limits Him certainly numbers Him. He who numbers Him rejects His eternity. He who says "how" seeks a description for Him. He who says "where" bounds Him. He is the Knower even if there be nothing to be known. He is the Sustainer even if there be nothing to be sustained. He is the Powerful even if there be nothing to be overpowered.

The sixth is sermon 161 from *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ خَالِقِ الْغِيَاثِ، وَسَاطِعِ الْمَهَادِ، وَمُسِيلِ الْوَهَادِ، وَمُخْصِبِ الْجَادِ، لَيْسَ لِأَوَّلِيَّتِهِ ابْتِدَاءٌ، وَلَا لِآخِرِيَّتِهِ انْقِصَاءٌ، هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ لَمْ يَزَلْ، وَالْبَاقِي بِلَا أَجَلٍ، خَرَجَتْ لَهُ الْجِهَادُ، وَوَحْدَتُهُ الشُّفَا، حَدُّ الْأَشْيَاءِ عِنْدَ خَلْقِهِ لَهَا بَاقَةٌ لَمْ يَنْ شَيْبُهَا، لَا تَقْدَرُهُ الْأَوْهَامُ بِالْمَحْشُودِ وَالْمَحْرُكَاتِ، وَلَا بِالْمُجَوَّاحِ وَالْأَتَوَاتِ

لَا يَقَالُ لَهُ مَتَى؟ وَلَا يَضْرِبُ لَهُ أَمْدٌ يَحْتَمَى الظَّاهِرُ لَا يَقَالُ: بِمَا؟ وَالْبَاطِنُ لَا يَقَالُ: فِيمَا؟ لَا شَيْءٌ كَقَضَى، وَلَا تَحْجُوبُ فَيُحْشَى. لَمْ يَقْرَبْ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِالنِّصَاقِ، وَلَمْ يَشُدَّ عَنْهَا بِافْتِرَاقٍ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ شَيْءٌ خُفِيَ، وَلَا كَرُودٌ لَقِظَتْ، وَلَا زِدَادٌ رَفُوعٌ، وَلَا ابْسَاطٌ خُطِوَتْ فِي لَيْلٍ دَاجٍ، وَلَا غَسَقِي سَاجٍ، يَتَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ الْقَمَرُ الْمُنِيرُ، وَتَغْتَبِهُ الشَّمْسُ ذَاتُ التَّوْرِ فِي الْأَوَّلِ وَالْآخِرِ، وَتَقْلِبُ الْأَزْمَنَةَ وَالنُّجُومِينَ أَقْبَلَ لَيْلٍ مُقْبِلٍ، وَادْبَارَ نَهَارٍ مُذْبِرٍ. قَبْلَ كُلِّ غَايَةٍ وَمُدَّعٍ وَكُلِّ إِخْصَاءٍ وَعَيْنٍ تَعَالَى عَنْهَا مَخْلَعُ الْمُحْدِثِينَ مِنْ صِفَاتِ الْأَقْدَارِ وَهَامَاتِ الْأَقْطَارِ، وَتَائِلِ الْمَآكِنِ، وَتَمَكَّنِ الْأَمَاكِنِ، فَكُنْ لِحَلْقِهِ مَضْرُوبٌ، وَإِلَى غَيْرِهِ مَنُشُوبٌ.

لَمْ يَخْلُقْ الْأَشْيَاءَ مِنْ أَصُولٍ أَزْمَنَةٍ، وَلَا أَوَائِلِ أَبَدِيَّةٍ بَلْ خَلَقَ مَا خَلَقَ فَاقَامَ حَتَّى، وَصَوَّرَ مَا صَوَّرَ فَآخَسَنَ صُورَتَهُ لَيْسَ لِقَى مِنْهُ امْتِنَاعٌ، وَلَا لَهُ بِطَاعَةٍ شَيْءٌ انْتِفَاعٌ. عِلْمُهُ بِالْأَمْوَاتِ الْمَاضِينَ كَعِلْمِهِ بِالْأَحْيَاءِ الْبَاقِينَ. وَعِلْمُهُ بِمَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ التَّلَى كَعِلْمِهِ بِمَا فِي الْأَرْضِينَ الشُّفْلَى.³¹²

Praise be to God Who is the Creator of people; He is the spreader of the earth. He makes streams to flow and vegetation to grow on high lands. His being first has no beginning, nor has His eternity any end. He is the First and from forever. He is the everlasting without limit. Foreheads bow before Him and lips declare His Oneness. He determined the limits of things at the time of His creating them, keeping Himself away from any likeness.

Imagination cannot surmise Him within the limits of movements of limbs or senses. It cannot be said about Him: "whence"; no time-limit can be attributed to Him by saying "until." He is apparent, but it cannot be said "from what." He is hidden, but it cannot be said "in what." He is not a body that can die, nor is He veiled so as to be enclosed therein. He is not near to things by way of touch, nor is He remote from them by way of separation.

The gazing of people's eyes is not hidden from Him, nor the repetition of words, nor the glimpse of hillocks, nor the treading of a footstep in

the dark night or in the deep gloom, where the shining moon casts its light and the effulgent sun comes in its wake, through its setting and appearing again and again with the rotation of time and periods by the approach of the advancing night or the passing away of the running day.

He precedes every extremity and limit, and every counting and numbering. He is far above what those whose regard is limited attribute to Him, such as the qualities of measure, having extremities, living in houses, and dwelling in abodes, because limits are meant for creation and are attributable only to other than God.

He did not create things from eternal matter nor from ever-existing examples, but He created whatever He created, and then He fixed limits thereto of His creation; He shaped whatever He shaped and gave the best shape to His creation. Nothing can disobey Him, but the obedience of something is of no benefit to Him. His knowledge about those who died in the past is the same as His knowledge about the remaining survivors, and His knowledge about whatever there is in the high skies is like His knowledge of whatever exists in the low earth.

The seventh one is sermon 184 from *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

مَا وَحَلَّ مِنْ كَيْفِهِ، وَلَا حَقِيقَتَهُ أَصَابَ مَنْ مَثَّلَهُ، وَلَا إِيَّاهُ عَقَى مَنْ شَبَّهَهُ، وَلَا صَدَرَ مِنْ إِشَارَاتِهِ وَتَوَهَّنَتْ كُلُّ مَعْرُوفٍ بِتَقْيِيدِهِ مَخْنُوعٌ، وَكُلُّ كَائِنٍ فِي سِوَاهُ مَمْلُوكٌ. فَاعِلٌ لَا يَاضْطَرُّ بِأَلَةٍ، مُقَدِّرٌ لَا يَحْتَوِلُ بِفِكْرَةٍ، غَفِيُّ لَا يَسْتَفَادُهُ، لَا تَصْغِيهِ الْأَوْقَاتُ، وَلَا تَزْفِلُهُ الْأَقْوَاتُ، سَبَقَ الْأَوْقَاتُ كَوْنُهُ، وَالْمَدَمُ وَجُودُهُ، وَالْإِبْتِدَاءُ أَوَّلُهُ

بِتَشْفِيهِ الْمَشَاعِرِ عَرِفَ أَنْ لَا مَشْعَرَ لَهُ، وَبِمُضَادَّتِهِ بَيْنَ الْأُمُورِ عَرِفَ أَنْ لَا حِدَ لَهُ، وَبِمُقَارَاتِهِ بَيْنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ عَرِفَ أَنْ لَا قَرِينَ لَهُ، حَادَا الثَّوَرِ بِالظَّلْمَةِ، وَالْوُضُوحَ بِالْهَيْمَةِ، وَالْجُمُودَ بِالْبَلَلِ، وَالْمَحْرُودَ بِالْعُرْدِ مَوْفَتْ بَيْنَ مُتَعَادِلَاتِهَا، مُقَارِنُ بَيْنَ مُتَبَايَنَاتِهَا، مُقَرَّبُ بَيْنَ مُتَبَاعِدَاتِهَا. لَا يَشْعَلُ بِحَرٍّ، وَلَا يَحْتَسِبُ بِبَرٍّ، وَإِنَّمَا تُحْدِ الْأَقْوَاتُ أَنْفُسَهَا، وَتُشِيرُ الْأَلَةُ إِلَى تَقَاتِيرِهَا مَتَمِّمَتَا، مُنْذُ الْقَدِيمَةِ، وَحَتَّى هَذِهِ الْأَزَلِيَّةَ وَجَبَّتْهَا «لَوْلَا» التَّكْمِيلَةُ بِهَا تَجَلَّى صَانِعُهَا الْقَوْلُ، وَبِهَا انْتَشَعَ عَنْ تَقَاتِيرِ السَّيُونَ لَا يَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ السُّكُونُ وَالْمَحْرَكَةُ، وَكَيْفَ يَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ مَا هُوَ أَجْرَاهُ، وَبَعْدَ فِيهِ مَا هُوَ أَهْمَاهُ، وَبَعْدَتْ فِيهِ مَا هُوَ أَحَدُهُ؟ إِذَا تَفَاوَتْ ذَاتُهُ، وَلَيْسَ رَأْيُهُ، وَلَا مَتْنُ مِنَ الْأَزَلِ مَفْتَاهُ، وَ لَكَانَ لَهُ وَرَاءَهُ إِذْ وَجِدَهُ أَمَامَهُ، وَلَا تَقَسَّ الْقَامُ إِذْ لَزِمَهُ الْقُضَاؤُ، وَإِذَا قَامَتْ آيَةُ الْخُضُوعِ فِيهِ، وَتَحَوَّلَ دَلِيلًا يَهْدِي أَنْ كَانَ مَذْلُوعًا عَلَيْهِ، وَخَرَجَ بِسُلْطَانِ الْإِمْتِنَاعِ مِنْ أَنْ يُوْثَرَفِيهِ مَا يُوْثَرَفِي غَيْرِهِ

الَّذِي لَا يَحُولُ، وَلَا يُدْرِكُ، وَلَا يَمُوتُ عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ، وَلَمْ يَلِدْ فَيَكُونَ مَوْلُودًا، وَلَمْ يُولَدْ فَيَصِرْ
مَخْلُودًا، جَلَّ عَنْ تَحْدِيدِ الْأَجَاءِ، وَكَهَزَعٍ عَنْ مَلَامَةِ النَّسَاءِ. لَا تَأْتِيهِ الْاَوْهَامُ كَهَيئَتِهِ، وَلَا تَوَاسُطُهُ
الْقَلْبُ كَهَيئَتِهِ، وَلَا تَمُوتُ كَهَيئَتِهِ، وَلَا تَلْبَسُهُ الْأَيْدِي كَهَيئَتِهِ لَا يَتَغَيَّرُ بِحَالٍ، وَلَا يَتَنَلَّزِلُ
بِالْأَحْوَالِ، وَلَا تُثَرِّبُهُ اللَّيَالِي وَالْأَلْهَامُ، وَلَا يَتَغَيَّرُ الطَّيَاءُ وَالطَّلَامُ، وَلَا يَوْصَفُ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْأَجْزَاءِ،
وَلَا بِالْجَوَارِحِ وَالْأَعْضَاءِ، وَلَا يَعْزِيضُ مِنَ الْأَعْرَاضِ، وَلَا يَالْتَمِسُهُ وَالْأَتْلَاضِ، وَلَا يَقَالُ لَهُ حَدٌّ
لَا نَهْيَةٌ، وَلَا انْقِطَاعٌ وَلَا نَهْيَةٌ، وَلَا أَنْ الْأَشْيَاءُ تُغَيِّرُهُ كَهَيْئَتِهِ أَوْ تُبَيِّنُهُ فَيُجِيلُهُ أَوْ
يُجَدِّدُهُ

لَيْسَ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ تَوَالِجٌ، وَلَا غَنَاءٌ بِمَارِجٍ، يَخْبِرُ لَا يَلْتَانِ وَلَهَوَاتٍ، وَنَسَمٌ لَا يَجْرُدُ فِي أَوْدَابٍ،
يُقُولُ وَلَا يَلْفُظُ، وَدَمِيطٌ، وَلَا يَحْطُطُ، وَبَدْوٌ لَا يَنْصُرُ، يَحِبُّ وَيَعْرِضُ مِنْ غَيْرِ دِقَّةٍ، وَيَتَحَنَّنُ وَ
يَنْخَسِبُ مِنْ غَيْرِ شَفَقَةٍ يَقُولُ لَنْ أَرَى إِذْ كُنْتُ: كُنْ، فَيَكُونُ، لَا يَصُوبُ يَفْرُغُ، وَلَا يَبْدَأُ يَنْتَعِ وَأَوْ
إِنَّمَا كَلَامُهُ سُبْحَانَهُ فَعَلَّ مِنْهُ أَتْقَامُ وَمِثْلُهُ لَنْ يَكُنْ مِنْ قَبْلِ ذَلِكَ كَلِمَةً، وَلَوْ كُنَّ قَدِيمًا لَكُنَّ الْمَا كَالِيًا
لَا يَقَالُ: كُنْ يَتَدَنَّ لَنْ يَكُنْ قَبْرِي عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ التَّحِيَّاتُ، لَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ فَضْلٌ، وَلَا
لَهُ عَلَيْهَا فَضْلٌ فَيَسْتَوِي السَّائِجُ وَالْمَصْنُوعُ، وَكَعَاكَ الْمُهَيَّي (الْمُجْدِع) وَالتَّهْيِجُ.

خَلَقَ الْخَلَائِقَ عَلَى غَيْرِ مِثَالٍ خَلَا مِنْ غَيْرِهِ، وَلَمْ يَنْتَعِنْ عَلَى خَلْقِهَا بِأَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَأَتَا الْأَرْضَ
فَأَنْسَكَهَا مِنْ غَيْرِ اسْتِغْلَالٍ، وَأَرْسَلَهَا عَلَى غَيْرِ قَرَارٍ، وَأَقَامَهَا بِغَيْرِ قَوَائِمٍ، وَرَفَعَهَا بِغَيْرِ دَعَائِمٍ، وَحَسَنَهَا
مِنْ الْأَوْدِ وَالْأَعْرَاجِ، وَمَنْعَهَا مِنَ التَّهْلُوتِ وَالْإِنْفِرَاجِ، أَرَى أَوْ تَدْفَعُ، وَضَرْبُ اسْتِنَادِهَا، وَ
اسْتِغْلَاضُ غُيُوبِهَا، وَخَدُّ أَوْدِيَعِهَا، فَلَمْ يَمِنْ مَابِئَاءَ، وَلَا خَفَّتْ مَاقَرَاءُ، هُوَ الظَّاهِرُ عَلَيْهَا بِسُلْطَانِهِ وَ
عَظَمَتِهِ، وَهُوَ الْهَاطِلُ لَهَا بِجَلِيلِهِ وَمَغْرِبَتِهِ، وَالتَّالِي عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا بِجَلَالِهِ وَعِزَّتِهِ، لَا يَجْزِيهِ شَيْءٌ
مِنْهَا حَالَتُهُ، وَلَا يَمْتَسِعُ عَلَيْهِ فَيْئَلُهُ، وَلَا يَقُوَّةُ الشَّيْءُ مِنْهَا فَيْئَقُهُ، وَلَا يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى ذِي عَالٍ فَمِنْ ذُلِّهِ
خَفَّتْ الْأَشْيَاءُ لَهُ وَذَلِكَ مُسْتَكِينَةٌ لِطَبْعَتِهِ، لَا تُسْتَطِيعُ الْمَرْبُ مِنْ سُلْطَانِهِ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ فَهَمَّجُ مِنْ
نَقْبِهِ وَضَرَهُ، وَلَا كَهَوْلُهُ فَيَكَاكُهُ، وَلَا تَطِيرُ لَهُ فَيَسَاوُهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ لَهَا بِتَدْوِجِهِ وَجُودِهَا عَلَى سَبِيلِ

مَوْجُودِهَا كَتَفْوُودِهَا. وَلَيْسَ كَاءُ الدُّنْيَا بِتَدَايِجِهَا بِأَجْبَ مِنْ أَثْلَانِهَا وَاعْتَرَايِهَا، وَكَفَتْ لَوَاجِئُهَا
جَمِيعُ حَوَائِجِهَا مِنْ كَمِيرِهَا وَتَهْنِئَتِهَا، وَمَا كُنْ مِنْ مُزَاجِهَا وَتَلْبِئَتِهَا، وَأَصْنَابِ اسْتِغْنَائِهَا وَأَجْنَائِهَا، وَ
مُتَكَلِّمَاتِهَا وَأَكْبِيَابِهَا عَلَى اخْتِنَابِ تَهْوِةٍ مَا قَدَّرَتْ عَلَى اخْتِنَابِهَا، وَلَا عَرَفَتْ كَيْفَ السَّيْلِ إِلَى
إِجْلَادِهَا، وَتَصَيَّرَتْ عُلُومَهَا فِي عِلْمِ ذَلِكَ وَتَأَمَّتْ، وَتَجَرَّتْ قُوَاهَا وَتَأَمَّتْ، وَجَنَّتْ عَلَى سَبِيلِ حَسْبَةٍ
عَارِفَةٍ بِهَا مَقْهُورَةٌ، مُفَرَّجَةٌ بِهَا تَجَرُّجُ عَنْ أَثْلَانِهَا، مُذْجِنَةٌ بِالضَّعْبِ عَنْ أَثْلَانِهَا.

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سُجَّاتُهُ يَوْمُ دَهْدَ قَاءِ الدُّنْيَا وَخَلَقَ لَأَشَى مَعَهُ كَمَا كَانَ قَبْلَ ابْتِدَائِهَا كَذَلِكَ يَكُونُ بَعْدَ قِيَامِهَا، بِلَا وَقْتٍ وَلَا مَكَانٍ، وَلَا حِينٍ، وَلَا زَمَانٍ، عُذِمَتْ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ الْأَجَالُ وَالْأَوَاقِثُ، وَزَالَتِ الشُّنُونُ وَالسَّاعَاتُ فَلَأَشَىءُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ مُصِيرُ جَمِيعِ الْأُمُورِ، بِلَا فَنَاءٍ مِنْهَا كَانَ ابْتِدَاءُ خَلْقِهَا، وَبَعْدَ امْتِنَاعٍ مِنْهَا كَانَ قِتَاوُهَا، وَلَوْ قَدَّرَتْ عَلَى الْاِمْتِنَاعِ دَامَ بَقَاوُهَا. لَمْ يَكُنْ أَنْ يَصْنَعْ شَيْءًا مِنْهَا إِذْ صَنَعَهُ، وَلَمْ يُوَدَّ مِنْهَا خَلْقَ مَا خَلَقَهُ وَبَرَأَهُ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا تَقْسِيدُ سُلْطَانٍ، وَلَا خَوْفٌ مِنْ زَوَالٍ وَتَقْصَانٍ، وَلَا لِلْاِسْتِغْنَاءِ بِهَا عَلَى بَدْمُكَائِرٍ، وَلَا لِلْاِخْتِرَانِ بِهَا مِنْ ضِدِّ مُقَاوِرٍ، وَلَا لِلْاِزْدِيَادِ بِهَا فِي مَلَكِهِ، وَلَا لِلْكَاتَرَةِ شَيْءٍ فِي شِرْكِهِ، وَلَا لَوْ خَشِيَ كَانَتْ مِنْهُ قَارِئَانِ يَسْتَأْنِسُ إِلَيْهَا.

لَمْ يَكُنْ هُوَ يَنْفَعُهَا بَعْدَ تَكْوِينِهَا، لَا لِاسْمٍ دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ فِي تَضَرُّفِهَا وَتَذْيِيرِهَا، وَلَا لِإِرَاحَةٍ وَاصِلَةٍ إِلَيْهِ وَلَا لِتَحْلٍ شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا عَلَيْهِ لَمْ يَمْلِكْ طَوْلُ بَقَائِهَا فَيَذْخُوهَ إِلَى سُرْعَةِ انْقِائِهَا، لَكِنَّهُ سُجَّاتُهُ دَبْرُهَا بِالْطَّلْفِ، وَامْتَسَكَهَا بِأَمْرِهَا، وَأَتَقْنَهَا بِقُدْرَتِهِ، لَمْ يَبْدَعْهَا بَعْدَ الْقَنَاءِ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَاجَةٍ مِنْهُ إِلَيْهَا، وَلَا اسْتِغْنَاءَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْهَا عَنْهَا، وَلَا لِالْاِصْرَافِ مِنْ حَالٍ وَخَشَةِ إِلَى حَالٍ اسْتِغْنَاءٍ، وَلَا مِنْ حَالٍ جَهْلٍ وَغَمٍّ إِلَى حَالٍ عِلْمٍ وَالتَّمْلَسِ، وَلَا مِنْ هَرَمٍ وَحَاجَةٍ إِلَى غِنَى وَكَثْرَةٍ، وَلَا مِنْ ذُلٍّ وَضَمَةٍ إِلَى عِزٍّ وَفُتُورَةٍ.³¹³

He who assigns to Him [different] conditions and attributes does not believe in His Oneness, nor does he who likens Him to anything grasp its reality. He who illustrates Him does not signify Him. He who points at Him and imagines Him does not mean Him. Everything that is known through the core of its essence has been created, and everything that exists by virtue of other things is the effect (of a cause). He works but not with the help of instruments. He fixes measures but not with the activity of thinking. He is rich but not by acquisition.

Times do not keep company with Him, and instruments do not help Him [in creation]. His Being precedes times. His Existence precedes non-existence and His eternity precedes beginning. By His creating the senses, it is known that He has no [bodily] senses. By the contraries in various matters, it is known that He has no contrary, and by the similarity between things, it is known that there is nothing similar to Him. He has made light the contrary of darkness, brightness contrary to gloom, dryness to moisture, and heat to cold.

He produces affection among inimical things. He fuses together diverse things, brings near remote things, and separates things that are joined together. He is not confined by limits, nor counted by numbers. Material

parts can surround things of their own kind, and organs can point out things similar to themselves [not God].

The word *mundhu* (i.e. "since") disproves their eternity, the word *qad* (which denotes nearness of time of occurrence) disproves their being forever, and the word *lawlā* ("if it were not") keeps them remote from perfection [so they can never be used for God]. Through them the Creator manifests Himself to the intelligence, and through them He is guarded from the sight of the eyes.

Stillness and motion do not occur in Him. How can they occur in Him while He has Himself created them, and how can a thing revert to Him that He first created, and how can a thing appear in Him that He first brought to appearance? If it had not been so, His Self would have become subject to diversity, His Being would have become divisible (into parts), and His reality would have been prevented from being deemed Eternal.

If there was a front of Him, there would also be a rear of Him. He would be in need of others only if shortage befell Him. In that case, the signs of created things would appear in Him, and He would become a sign (leading to other objects) instead of signs leading to Him. Through the might of His abstention (from affectedness), He is far above being affected by things that affect others.

He is that Who does not change or vanish. The concept of deterioration is never applied to Him. He has not begotten anyone, lest He be contained within limits. He is too High to have sons. He is too purified to contact women [sexual needs]. Imagination cannot reach Him so as to assign Him quantity. Understanding cannot reach Him so as to give him shape. Senses do not perceive Him so as to feel Him. Hands cannot touch Him so as to rub against Him. He does not change into any condition. He does not pass from one state to another. Nights and days do not turn Him old. Light and darkness do not alter Him.

He cannot be described through (the possession of) parts, or through limbs and organs, or by an accidental quality or alteration or portions. It cannot be said that He has a limit or end or termination; nor do things control Him so as to raise Him or lower Him; nor does anything carry Him so as to bend Him or keep Him erect. He is not inside things or outside them. He conveys news, but not with the tongue or voice. He listens, but not with the holes of the ears or the organs of hearing. He speaks, but does not utter words.

He remembers, but does not memorize. He determines, but not by exercising His mind. He loves and approves without any sentimentality (of heart). He hates and feels angry without any painstaking. When He

intends to create something. He says: *...Be, and it is* (2:117), but not through a voice that strikes (the ears) and then that call is heard. His speech is an act of His creation, which never existed before this. If there had been [another] eternal being, it would have been a second god.

It cannot be said that He came into being after He had not been in existence because in that case the attributes of the created things would be assigned to Him and there would remain no difference between them and Him, and He would have no distinction from them. Otherwise, the Creator and the created would become equal and the initiator and the initiated would be on the same level. He created (the whole of) creation without any example made by someone else, and He did not secure the assistance of anyone outside of His creation for creating it.

He created the earth without being busy with His other creations [as He created others without being busy with the creation of the earth]. He retained the earth without support, made it stand without legs, raised it without pillars, protected it against bending and curving, and defended it against crumbling and splitting (into parts). He fixed mountains on it like stumps, solidified its rocks, caused its streams to flow, and opened wide its valleys. Whatever He made did not suffer from any frailty, and whatever He strengthened did not show any weakness.

He manifests Himself over the earth with His authority and greatness. He is aware of its inside through His knowledge. He has power over everything on the earth by virtue of His sublimity and dignity. Nothing from the earth that He may ask for defies Him, nor does it oppose Him so as to overpower Him. No swift-footed creature can run away from Him so as to surpass Him. He is not needy of any possessing person so that he should feed Him. All things bow to Him and are humble before His greatness. They cannot flee from His authority to someone else in order to escape His benefit or His harm. There is no parallel for Him who may match Him and no one like Him so as to equal Him.

He will destroy the earth after its existence, till all that exists on it will become non-existent. But the extinction of the world after its creation is no more marvelous than its first formation and invention. How could it be otherwise? Even if all the animals of the earth, whether birds or beasts, stabled cattle or pasturing ones, of different origins and species, dull people and sagacious men, all jointly try to create (even) a mosquito, they are not able to bring it into being and do not understand what is the way to its creation. Their wits are bewildered and wandering. Their powers fall short and fail, and return dazzled and weary, knowing that they are defeated, admitting their inability to produce it, also realizing that they are too weak (even) to destroy it.

Surely, after the extinction of the world, God the Glorified will remain alone with nothing else beside Him. He will be, after its extinction, as He was before its creation without time or place or moment or period. At His realm of existence, period and time will not exist, and years and hours will disappear. There will be nothing except God, the One, the Omnipotent.

When He made anything of the world, the making of it did not cause Him any difficulty, and the creation of anything that He created and formed did not fatigue Him. He did not create it to heighten His authority nor for fear of loss or harm, nor to seek its help against an overwhelming foe, nor to guard against any avenging opponent with its help, nor for the extension of His domain by its help, nor for boasting (over the largeness of His possession) against a partner, nor because He felt lonely and desired to seek its company.

Then after its creation, He will destroy it, but not because any worry has overcome Him in its upkeep and administration or for any pleasure that will accrue to Him, or for the cumbrousness of anything over Him. The length of its [creation] life does not weary Him so as to induce Him to its quick destruction.

But God, the Glorified, has maintained it with His kindness, kept it intact with His command, and perfected it with His power. Then after its destruction, He will resuscitate it, but not for any need of His own towards it, nor to seek the assistance of any of its things against it, nor to change over from the condition of loneliness to that of company, nor from the condition of ignorance and blindness to that of knowledge, nor from paucity and need towards needlessness, nor from disgrace and lowliness towards honor and prestige.

This blissful sermon comes to an end here. As it consists of much useful metaphysical information, we quoted the whole of it. Sayyid Raḍī, the compiler of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, says: "This sermon more than any other sermon has substantial knowledge."³¹⁴

The eighth hadith: Imam Ali answers the Bedouin's question concerning Monotheism on the Day of [the Battle of] Jamāl:

Shaykh Ṣadūq Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Bābwayh Qumi has narrated in *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* and *Khiṣāl* by means of a common chain of narrators, and in *Kitāb al-Maʿānī al-Akḥbār* with another chain—but both chains are from Muqḍām Ibn Shurayḥ Ibn Hānū, narrating from his father that on the Day of Jamāl, a Bedouin stood up in the presence of Imam Ali and said: "O Master of the Faithful, are you saying that God is just One?" The narrator says that right then, the gathered people shouted at him, saying: "O you the ignorant Bedouin, do you

not see that the Holiness has a lot of important things to think about and problems of the people and environment to solve?" (They meant it was not a proper occasion to ask such a question.) However, Imam Ali said to the crowd: "Leave him alone; his question is the very question that I am going to put forward with these people of Jamāl!" Then, the Holiness turned to the man saying:

يَا عَرَابِي، إِنَّ الْقَوْلَ فِي أَنْ اللَّهَ وَاحِدٌ عَلَى أَنْ تَعْدَ أَقْسَامَ: فَوَجْهَانِ مِنْهَا لَا يُجُوزَانِ عَلَى اللَّهِ عِزُّوَجَلْ،
وَوَجْهَانِ يُمَكِّنَانِ فِيهِ
فَأَمَّا اللَّذَانِ لَا يُجُوزَانِ عَلَيْهِ: هَوَايُ الْقَائِلِ: وَاحِدٌ يَفْصِدُ بِهِ بَابَ الْأَعْدَادِ هَذَا مَا لَا يُجُوزُ، لِأَنْ مَا لَا
ثَانِي لَهُ لَا يَدْخُلُ فِي بَابِ الْأَعْدَادِ أَمَا تَرَى أَنَّهُ كَفَرَمَنْ قَالَ: ثَلَاثٌ ثَلَاثَةٌ؟ وَقَوْلُ الْقَائِلِ: هُوَ وَاحِدٌ مِنَ
الْكَافِ، يَرُدُّ بِهِ التَّوَعُّعَ مِنَ الْجَنَسِ. هَذَا مَا لَا يُجُوزُ عَلَيْهِ، لِأَنَّهُ تَشْبِيهُ، وَجَعَلَ رَبَّنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَمَتَّأَى
وَأَمَّا الْوَجْهَانِ اللَّذَانِ يُمَكِّنَانِ فِيهِ: هَوَايُ الْقَائِلِ: هُوَ وَاحِدٌ لَيْسَ لَهُ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ شِبْهُهُ، كَذَلِكَ رَبَّنَا. وَقَوْلُ
الْقَائِلِ: إِنَّهُ عِزُّوَجَلْ أَحَدِي الْمَعْنَى، بِمَعْنَى بِهِ أَنَّهُ لَا يَنْقَسِمُ فِي وُجُودٍ وَلَا عَقْلِ وَلَا وَهْمٍ. كَذَلِكَ رَبَّنَا
عِزُّوَجَلْ.³¹⁵

O Arab! This statement that God is One has four phrases, two of which cannot be attributed to God, glory be to Him, and two of which are God's attributes.

But those two phrases that are not permissible to attribute Him with are first, the statement of the speaker when he says "One," and in the meantime he thinks of the numbers that are used in counting. It is not right in God's case, because He has no second or third, and He cannot be counted. Have you not considered that the one who said: "the third one of the three," that God is one of the three elements (father, son, and the Holy Spirit), has become an unbeliever?" Second, when another speaker says "Oneness" as in "He is one of the people," he means, He is one of the human species. This is not suitable in God's case; God is beyond the attributes of great, greater, and the greatest!

However, there are two phrases that are true about God: one is the statement of the speaker who says: "He is One," and there is no similarity to Him in the things. [Yes,] this is our Creator. And another one is the statement of the speaker who says: "God the Almighty is unique in meaning," which means that His reality cannot be divided into [extra-mental] existence, intelligibility, and imaginability. Such is God, glory be to Him.

Ninth is the statement of Imam Ali narrated by Shaykh Mufid in *Irshād* concerning the necessity of knowing God, the most Exalted, and His Monotheism, and rejecting any similarity to Him, the attributes of His Fairness and Justice, which are narrated by Abu al-Hasan Hudhalī, from Zuhri and 'Isā Ibn Zayd, quoting Ṣāliḥ Ibn Kaysān, that Imam Ali in pursuing the necessity of knowing God and His Monotheism says:

أَوَّلُ عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ، وَأَصْلُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ تَوْحِيدُهُ، وَنِظَامُ تَوْحِيدِهِ تَقْيُّ الشَّيْءِ عَنْهُ.³¹⁶ جَلَّ عَنْ أَنْ
تُجْلَهُ الصِّفَاتُ لِتَهْدَاهُ الثُّغُولُ أَنْ كُلُّ مَنْ خَلَقَهُ الصِّفَاتُ مَصْنُوعٌ، وَهَذِهِ الثُّغُولُ اللَّهُ جَلَّ وَعَلَا
صَالِحٌ لَيْسَ بِمَصْنُوعٍ.
يُصْنَعُ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ عَلَيْهِ، وَبِالثُّغُولِ يَتَعَدَّدُ مَعْرِفَتُهُ، وَبِالتَّظَرُّ ثَبُتُ حُجَّتِهِ جَلَّ الْخَلْقُ دَلِيلًا عَلَيْهِ
فَكَشَفَ بِهِ عَنْ رُبُوبِيَّتِهِ هُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَرُّ فِي أَرْبَعِيَّتِهِ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ فِي لَيْبِيَّتِهِ، وَلَا يَدُّ لَهُ فِي رُبُوبِيَّتِهِ
يُضَادَّتِيهِ بَيْنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ الْمُضَادَّةِ عِلْمُ أَنْ لَا يَدُّ لَهُ، وَبِمَقَارِبَتِهِ بَيْنَ الْأُمُورِ الثَّغِيرَةِ عِلْمُ أَنْ لَا قَرِينَ لَهُ فِي
كَلَامٍ كُلِّهِ بِحَقِّهِ، بِإِيجَابِهِ الصِّكَلِ.³¹⁷

The first step in worshipping God is to know Him well, and the right way of knowing Him is to know His Unity. The way of knowing His Unity is avoiding any similitude to Him. God is High and beyond the imagination of any attribution, because man's wisdom witnesses that whatever attributions [about God] it receives are created; however, wisdom acknowledges that God, the Almighty, is the Creator, but not created. God's existence is reasoned to by his creations, and He is known by the means of intellects and wisdom, and by profound thinking and logical reasoning one obtains proof of His knowledge. God assigned the creatures a good reason for His existence, and He unveiled His Sovereignty by means of them. He is Unique in His eternity. He has no partner in His Divinity, nor any helpers in his Sovereignty.

As He has set up contraries among the verity of things, it is understood that He Himself has no contrary discord. And as He has assigned nearness and similarity among things, it is understood that He has no similarity to match with Him.

This sermon is very lengthy, and Shaykh Mufid has said: "The present book has not enough space to quote the whole sermon."

Moreover, after this statement of the Imam, Shaykh Mufid has said:

From among hadiths on the dissimilarity of Almighty God is the hadith that narrated by Sha'bi:

When the Master of the Faithful heard a man saying: "I swear by that God who is hidden behind those clouds!" he said:

وَبَلَّكَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَجَلٌ مِنْ أَنْ يَحْتَجِبَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ أَوْ يَحْتَجِبَ عَنْهُ شَيْءٌ. سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ
مَكَانٌ، وَلَا يَمُوتُ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

"Woe upon you; God is greater than anything to hide behind! Glory be to Him that no place can embrace Him; and nothing in the heavens or on the earth is away from His Sight!"

The man said: "O Master of the Faithful, am I obliged to pay expiation for my swearing?" He stated:

لَا إِنَّكَ لَمْ تَحْلِفْ بِاللَّهِ كَلِمَةً كَهَذِهِ الْحَثِّ وَإِنَّمَا حَلَفْتَ بِغَيْرِهِ

"No, you have not sworn by God so as to be obligated to pay expiation for it; you have sworn by someone else."

The tenth saying of the Imam about the Unity of God and the mode of His existence is a decisive short statement, and Shaykh Ṭabarsī has explained this sermon in *Ihtijāj*:

دَلِيلُهُ آيَاتُهُ، وَوُجُودُهُ إِجَابَتُهُ، وَتَفَرُّقُهُ تَوَحُّدُهُ، وَتَوْحِيدُهُ تَمَيُّزُهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَحُكْمُ التَّمَيُّزِ تَيَقُّنُهُ
صِفَةُ لَا يَتَنَوَّنُهُ عَزْلُهُ رَبٌّ خَالِيٌ غَيْرُ مَرْئُوبٍ مَخْلُوقٍ كُلُّ مَا سُورَ صَوْرُهُ بِخِلَافِهِ

The proof for His existence is His signs [creations] and affirming Him is itself His external existence and realization; getting to know Him is through His Monotheism, and His Monotheism is that which separates Him from His creatures. And the meaning of His separation is like the separation of attributes from things attributed, not the separation of two [completely] distinguished things. He is really the Creator; He is not created; whatever would come into one's mind would not be like such Existence.

And then he said:

لَيْسَ بِاللَّهِ مَنْ عُرِفَ بِتَفْسِيهِ هُوَ الدَّلِيلُ بِالذَّلِيلِ عَلَيْهِ وَالْوُدَى بِالْمَعْرِفَةِ إِلَيْهِ³¹⁸

"The one who is known through his essence is not God. It is an indicative of the evidence and knowledge leading us to just know that He exists [not the reality of His existence]."

The eleventh is sermon 183 from *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

المحمدية الذي لا تتركه الشواهد، ولا تحويه المقام، ولا تراه الواو، ولا تحببه الشواهد، النال
على قدمه مخلوق خلقه، ومحدث خلقه على وجوده، وباشتياهم على أن لا يشبه له الذي
صدق في معاده، وإن تقع عن ظلم عباده، وقام بالقسط في خلقه، وعند عليهم في حكمه
مستشهد بخبر الأشياء على أركانه، وبما وصفها به من العجز على قدرته، وبما اضطرها إليه من
القضاء على دوائمه

واحد لا يحد، ودائم لا يأم، وقائم لا يمتد
تلك الأذهان لا يمتد، وتلك الأركان لا يمتد، لا يمتد له الزمان، بل يمتد لها بها، وبها
انتفع منها، وأنها حاكما ليس بذي كبر، انتفعت به الثعالب فكبرته عجيباً ولا يذى عظم
تألف به القابل فطعمته عجيباً، بل كبر قاناً، وعظم سلطاناً.³¹⁹

Praise be to God. He is such that senses cannot perceive Him, place cannot contain Him, eyes cannot see Him, and veils cannot cover Him. He proves His eternity by bringing His creation into existence, and by originating His creation (He proves) His existence; by their (mutual) similarity, He proves that there is nothing similar to Him. He is true in His promise. He is too high to be unjust to His creatures. He stands by equity among His creation and practices justice over them in His commands. He provides evidence of His being through the creation of things, through their marks of incapability before His power, and of His being eternal through their powerlessness against death.

He is One, but not by counting. He is everlasting without being in time. He is existent without any support. Minds admit of Him without (any activity of the) senses. Things that can be seen stand witness to Him without confronting Him. Imagination cannot encompass Him. He manifests Himself to the imagination with His help to the imagination, and refuses to be imagined by the imagination. He has made imagination the arbiter (in this matter). He is not big in the sense of volume is vast so that His body is contained in it. Nor is He great in the sense that His limits should extend to the utmost and His frame be extensive. But He is grand in position and great in authority.

The twelfth is a hadith that Shaykh Ṣaḍūq has narrated by means of his chain in *Maʿānī al-Akhbār* from Omar Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, who has narrated it from his father Imam Ali, saying the Prophet stated:

التوحيد ظاهره في جلّيه، وباطنه في ظاهره، ظاهره موصوف لا يرى، وباطنه موصوف لا يخفى.
يطلب بكل مكان، ولا يغفل عنه مكان طرفة عين. حاضر غير متحدود، وغائب غير مفقود.³²⁰

The outward aspect of His Unity is in His inward, and His inward is outward. His outward aspect can be seen and explained, while His inward exists and still is not hidden. He exists wherever you want to look for His existence, and not the tiniest place is void of Him even for a blink (of the eyes). He ready has no limitation, and He is absent without getting lost.

In any case, these twelve hadiths were among the numerous hadiths that the Shi'a Imams, and particularly Imam Ali, have narrated about God and metaphysical statements about the nature of His existence.

In brief the reality is this: the most Holy Essence of God, glory to Him in the highest way, is perfect and complete; it is actually beyond perfection and completion. That is, it is everlasting and ever-existing; it is great and vast with no ending to it; it can never ever be measured, nor can any limitation to it supposed. What is essential for such a being is to be Unity. Unity is His greatest attribute among all other attributes. It is such a Unity that cannot be imagined or numbered; whatever is assumed about it, it refers not to Him. Thus His Holy Being is not limited, while He is always manifest and present everywhere and accompanies all being.

وَبِاسْمَائِكَ الَّتِي مَلَأْتَ أَوَّلَهُنَّ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ.³²¹

"We swear by Your Names that have filled the bases of everything."

وَبِشُورِ وَجْهِكَ الَّذِي أَحَاءَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ.³²²

"And we swear by Your bright appearance by which everything has been illuminated." It cannot be assumed of something to be in a place at a certain time when it is not really there.

وَمَوْجِئِكُمُ الْهَامِكُمُ.

And He is with you wherever you are (57:4). And everything is affirmed with Him and He is present with every single thing.

God is not away from anything, nor is anything absent from Him, nor is anything hidden from Him, and not even a tiny place is void of His existing. He encompasses everything at any time.

وَمَوْعِدُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّبْدِيهِ.

...and He is Witness over everything (34:47).

أَلَا إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطٌ

...beware, He encompasses everything (41:54).

Now, the existence of all beings is related to Him, and it is for their own sake. They have been sealed and branded to be weak, lowly, and humbled creatures. The chief source of Being is God on Whom all things depend.

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward; and He has knowledge of everything (57:3). The attributions with which the Divine Essence is attributed, such as life, knowledge, and power, are what one can think of, and they can logically be reasoned to. However, these meanings have no access to His essence; otherwise the Essence would be mixed up with numerous opposite attributions.

Notions are by nature universal. Even if we add thousands of specifications to them, notions will remain universal. For example, if we say his knowledge is endless, it is still a notion in our mind, and if we say His knowledge is not like the knowledge of other beings, it is still a notion and has no existential perfection, so it does not represent the abundance of the knowledge. Adding adjectives to it does not make Him another being, nor does it separate Him from the meaning. The attributes and names that give new meaning to existing things and limit them have no meaning for or effect on Him. When the adjectives for knowledge, life, power, and for many other things come to the extra-mental, they could become limitless. The secret of this matter is that the concept is barring and giving limitation, as every concept is limited by another concept. Although knowledge is considered to be limitless, its meaning is other than power, and the meaning of either of them is contrary to life. Nevertheless these names and attributes³²³ are limited and are other than the reality itself. Even if they are unending but as they are affected by other notions that have their entities, they limit each other, in the sense that the concept of life is other than the concept of power and the concept of power is other than the concept of knowledge; but when they come to the realm of existence, all these concepts are concomitant through the reality of existence, which can encompass the whole reality of attributes.

Because of the intensity of the reality of the Divine Essence and His attributes, there cannot be imagined a place without the Light, Knowledge, and Power of the Exalted, glory be to Him, because there is no way or means to conceptually [in the human mind] conceive of and analyze His Excellency the Exalted Being; there is nothing to

distinguish and realize between His Outward and Inward aspects. His Outward aspect is within His Inward, and His Inward within His Outward aspect. The difference between the Outward aspect and the Inward is due to limitation that separates them from each other. So He exists in all beings without exception, but His being there does not mean He has entered into them. Here is only Unity; duality has no meaning here. He is not within things to be analyzed in two parts. This is why Imam Ali says that the attribute and the name become a single unit.

In any case, this kind of interpretation of the quality of Monotheism is only through the Holy Qur'an and the Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad al-Muṣṭafā. It has not been explained in any other divine books or by any messengers before the rise of Islam.

Gustave Le Bon, the French writer, in his book *The World of Islamic Civilization* (translated in Persian as *Tamaddun-i Islam va Arab*) says: "The doctrine of Divine Unity that the Prophet of Islam has presented is more intellectual and comprehensive than the one presented by Jesus, the Messiah."

Imam Ali received the essence of Monotheism from the noble Prophet, and because of his virtues and constant reflection, he kept it in his actual being until reaching the highest position of a perfect being. In these sermons and lectures he has commented on and made statements about the glorious essence of the Divine Unity and His attributes. All of them come from his secret and inner awareness that, like the illuminating sun, unveils the kernel of the secret and introduces it to the world.

Our Master, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, has explained this sermon in detail in *Tafsīr al-Mizān*,³²⁴ and then with a historical approach, he has said that through history and among all nations, it has been believed that the whole of existence has a Creator, and that the Creator is One. Even with the idolaters, whose religion is based on blasphemy, if they are well investigated, it becomes clear that the origin of their belief is the existence of One Creator; however, besides the One Creator, they believe that there are some assistants called idols. This fact is expressed in the Qur'an:

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا الْيَعْقُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ رُفُوعٌ

...We do not worship them except they bring us closer to God (39:3).

This belief diverted from its course, and gradually the people went after different deities and in the end forgot the true meaning of God's Unity. And in the process of time, by wiping out different objects from their minds, they just had the concept of unity in its

numeric sense (*waḥdat al-adadi*) instead of the existential unity of God (*waḥdat al-wujūdī*)

And that is why whatever is said by the divinity philosophers in ancient Egypt, Greece, Alexandria and some others, as well as those who have followed them, is that the Divine Unity in essence is the truth. Even Shaykh al-Raʿīs Abu Ali Sinā has recorded it in *Kitāb al-Shifāʾ*—he believes the Divine Unity in essence is correct. Following Ibn Sinā, the majority of Muslim philosophers did not discuss this issue within existential philosophy; rather they accepted that the Divine Unity in essence is correct, which would logically end up with the ideal of numeric unity. Although they have taken their notions from the Holy Qurʾan, they have not understood the real meaning of Unity in essence.³²⁵

This is a summary of what the intellectual philosophers inspired from Imam Ali have said here about the reality of the Unity of God. The strangest thing about it is that, after Ali, this very important metaphysical point was not stated by any Muslim philosophers and theologians, and it remained unknown for a thousand years; but quoting the Imam, they addressed it and could solve many of their theological and metaphysical dilemmas.³²⁶

ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī maintains: "It is at this point that a thoughtful man is surprised that some so-called learned people and scholars say these sayings are not from Ali, but they are what Sayyid Raḍī has invented."³²⁷

I wish I knew how these most delicate metaphysical thoughts could be from that commentator, a delicate discussion that neither the companions nor any other scholars could suggest throughout history.

It seems that this claim comes from certain people who by false accusation try to disprove the authenticity of *Nahj al-Balāghah* in order to put it aside. They cry at the top of their voices that the facts of the Qurʾan and the basis and highly Islamic statements are something other than this eloquent book in their hands!³²⁸

We have mentioned all these here to prove that whatever sermons and hadiths have been narrated on this principle are reliable; they are not common and ordinary thoughts written by common people, so highly intellectual people need to read and understand them. That is why our master, the late ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī, has pointed out the necessity of promoting Islamic philosophy. He believed that it is the basic prerequisite for finding one's way to the knowledge of the Household.

However, by means of this sermon, we have introduced our discussion concerning Monotheism of the Almighty Creator. Now we come back to the statements of Imam Ali:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقْعِدُونِي

and

لَوْ كُنْتُ فِي الْوَسَادَةِ...

Concerning his first statement, 'Allāmah Baḥrānī has narrated in *Ghāyat al-Marām* seven hadiths from the Sunnis: from the *Musnad* of Ahmad Ḥanbal, Khārazmī, Ḥammu'ī, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, and some others. He has also narrated seven hadiths from the Shi'a: from Ṣadūq in *Amālī* and so on; and from the *Tafsīr* of Muhammad Ibn 'Abbās Ibn Marwān, *Amālī* of Shaykh Ṭūsī, Muhammad Ibn Hasan Ṣaffār in *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, and Shaykh Mufīd in *Amālī*.³²⁹

And about the second statement of the Imam, in *Ghāyat al-Marām* three Sunni scholars have narrated: Khārazmī, Ibn Muqāzili, and Ḥammu'ī; and from the Shi'a, there are 19 hadiths from Kulaynī in *Kāfi*, Mufīd in *Ikhtisāṣ*, Ṣaffār in *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, and Shaykh Ṭūsī in *Amālī*.³³⁰

Abdullah Kawwā' was one of the Khawārij who was killed in the Battle of Nahrawān. When he was one of Ali's companions, he kept asking His Excellency some meaningless questions to make him irritated so that he would make mistakes in answering his questions, and then in order to find an excuse to gossip about his statements in the absence of the Imam.

Shaykh Ṭūsī has narrated from 'Aṣbagh Ibn Nubātah:

I was sitting in the presence of Ali, when Ibn Kawwā' entered the room and said:

O Imam Ali, what is the meaning of the verse:

وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مِمَّنْ أَتَىٰ الْأُيُوتَ مِنْ أَوْبَانِهَا

...and it is not piety that you enter the houses through the backdoors, but piety is in doing one's duty; so step into [your] houses through the [main] doors (2:189)?

The Imam explained that the verse itself is enough to be understood, and then he asked:

So what is the meaning of:

وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَابِ رِجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلَّ ذِي سِمَاتٍ

...on the Heights, above them, are men who recognize them by their features (7:46)?

The Imam also explained this one in detail.³³¹

There is another hadith from Ibn Kawwā' that he asked the Imam: "Who is it who can see during the day and in the dark at night, and he who is blind in both? And he who is blind at night but sees at daytime; and one who sees at night but is blind during the day?"

The Imam replied:

وَيْلَكَ، سَلْ عَمَّا يَنْفَعُكَ وَلَا تَسْأَلْ عَمَّا لَا يَنْفَعُكَ

"Woe upon you! Do ask that which benefits you, but do not ask about what has no benefit to you!" Then the Imam went on advising him, and at the end said:

وَيْلَكَ يَا نِكَوَال، فَتَنُّ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، بِتَأْتِخِ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامَ وَبِنَايِجْمِهِ

"Woe upon you, O son of Kawwā'?! We, the sons of Abu Tālib, are those for whose sake God has set up Islam, and through us He will bring it to an end."

Aṣḡagh says:

When Ali descended the pulpit, I followed him, saying: "O Master of the Faithful, you clarified it for me by what you said"; and then Imam Ali told me:

يَا أَصْغَحُ، مَنْ شَكَّ فِي وَلَائِي كَذَبَكَ فِي إِيْمَانِهِ، وَمَنْ أَقْرَبَ وَلَائِي كَذَبَ أَقْرَبَ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. وَلَائِي مَتَّصِلَةٌ بِوَلَايَةِ اللَّهِ كَهَاتَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُ بَيْنَ صَاحِبَيْهِمَا أَصْغَحُ، مَنْ أَقْرَبَ وَلَائِي كَذَبَ أَقْرَبَ وَمَنْ أَمْسَكَ وَلَائِي كَذَبَ خَلَبَ وَغَيْرَ وَهُوَ فِي النَّارِ، وَمَنْ دَخَلَ فِي النَّارِ لَيْتَ فِيمَا
اِخْتَلَفَ³³²

O Aṣḡagh, whoever doubts my Guardianship has certainly doubted in his belief. And he who believes in my Guardianship, he has indeed believed in the Guardianship of God, glory to Him in the highest. My Guardianship is attached to the Guardianship of God—like these two [two fingers of mine that are joining now]. O Aṣḡagh, whoever confesses to my Guardianship is victorious, but he who rejects my Guardianship is lowly and lost. He will fall into Hell-fire and abide there for several *hugh*.³³³

Ṭabarsī has narrated from Aṣḡagh:

LESSONS ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SEVEN TO ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY

On the pulpit, in the Mosque of Kūfa, Imam Ali addressed a sermon to us, saying:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، سَلُونِي فَإِنَّ بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ عِلْمًا جَمًّا

"O people, do ask me, for indeed I am full of knowledge."

Ibn Kawwā' stood up and asked:

O Master of the Faithful, what does

النَّارِيبَاتِ ذُرُوزًا

mean?

The Imam answered that it concerns the winds. He asked:

and

الْحَامِلَاتِ وَفُزًّا

The Imam said they were the clouds. He asked:

Then what does

الْجَارِيَاتِ يَمْرًا

mean?

The Imam answered that they were the ships. Next he asked:

And then what does

الْقِسْمَاتِ أَمْرًا

mean?

The Imam answered that they were the angels (51:1-40). Then, after getting his right answers, Ibn Kawwā' said: "O Master of the Faithful, I have gathered that there are some contradictions in the Book of God."

Imam Ali stated:

فَكُلُّكَ أَمْرٌ بَيْنَ كَوْنٍ، كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ يَسْتَقْبِلُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا وَلَا يَنْفَعُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا، فَتَلَّ عَمَّا هَذَا لَكَ

"O Ibn Kawwā', some verses in God's Book confirm some other verses, but do not contradict them! Now do ask whatever you want."

He said:

O Master of the Faithful, somewhere we hear it is said:

رَبُّ الْمَشَارِقِ وَالْمَغَارِبِ

Lord of the easts and the wests (70:40), and in another place it says:

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ

Lord of the two easts and two wests (55:17), and in another verse it says:

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ

Lord of the east and the west (26:28).

The Imam replied:

O Ibn Kawwā', in this place, this is the east and that way is the west. But when it says, *Lord of the two easts and two wests*, it is because the winter east and the summer west are separated. Do you not know the angle of the sun to the earth is different? Then when it says *Lord of the easts and Lord of the wests*, is because there are 360 signs of the Zodiac. Each day the sun rises in a certain sign of the Zodiac and sets in a different one; it will not appear in the same sign of the Zodiac until the next year, on the same day.

Then he asked: "O Master of the Faithful, what is the distance from the soles of your feet to the firmament of God?" The Imam replied: "O son of Kawwā', ask about such things that you can learn something new about; do not try to find some fault in me by your questioning! The distance from the soles of my feet to the firmament of God is as much as a believer sincerely says: "There are no other deities but God."

Then the Imam added:

If someone sincerely says: "There are no other deities but God," all his sins disappear—as a letter disappears in the context of a whole written work. If he sincerely repeats: "There are no other deities but God," the doors of the heavens will tear apart and the lines of the angels fall into disarray. Then some angels will say to some others: "Be humble before the magnitude of God." If for the third time he sincerely says: "There are no other deities but God," God says: "Do abide there, by My Majesty and Loftiness; I forgave you on account of your stating that sincere statement of yours."

Then, the Imam recited this verse:

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُ

Toward Him the pure and sincere words ascend and the eminent action exalts it (35:10).

Then, Ibn Kawwā' went on asking his lengthy questions about the firmament and the disappearing of the phases of the moon to the companions of the Prophet—Abūdhār Ghaffārī, Salmān Fārsī, Ḥudhayfah Yamānī, 'Ammār Yāsir—and finally to the Imam himself, and he received sufficient and proper answers to all of them.

Then he asked:

O Master of the Faithful, do inform me about this statement of God, glory to Him in the highest:

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَبِيلُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ
يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا.

Say: "Shall We inform you about those who have lost the most through actions?" They are those whose efforts led them astray during the life of this world, while they reckoned they were doing something fine (18:104).

The Imam answered: "Here 'the unbelievers' mean the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians. They used to be correct in their religion, but later they gradually distorted it while they believe they have been right in doing so."

At that moment the Imam climbed down from the pulpit, and touching Ibn Kawwā' on the shoulder, he said: "O Ibn Kawwā', the people of Nahrawān are not far away from these Jews and Christians."

And Ibn Kawwā' said: "O Master of the Faithful, I will never follow anyone or ask any question from them."

Āṣbagh Ibn Nubātah says: "The day after, we visited Ibn Kawwā' on the day of the Battle of Nahrawān. Someone told him: "May your mother mourn upon your corpse, yesterday you were questioning Imam Ali, but now you are fighting against him!" Right then, we noticed that a soldier attacked him with a spade and killed him on the spot.³³⁴

Shaykh Ṭabarsī has narrated from his father quoting Imam Ṣādiq as saying that:

One day, the Master of the Faithful was sitting at Ruḥbah and some people were sitting close to him. One of them stood up and said: "O Master of the Faithful, how does it happen that you are in such a great position, but your father is going to be tortured in the fire?" The Imam said:

Keep quiet! I swear by Him Who sent Muhammad as a Prophet, if on the day of Resurrection, my father wants to intercede for all the

sinner on the earth, his intercession will be fulfilled. Do you think that my father is tortured in the fire while I am the divider of Heaven and Hell? By Him who rightly raised Muhammad as the Prophet, on the day of Resurrection, my father's light will put out all the other lights; his light will dominate all the lights except five lights. They are the light of Muhammad, my light, the lights of Hasan and Husayn, and together the lights of nine of the Household of Husayn. Because my father's light is from our light.³³⁵

Ibn 'Abd al-Birr has explained in *Istī'ab* that 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Odhaynah Ghanawī has quoted his father, Odhaynah, as saying: "I went to Omar Ibn Khattāb and asked him from where we should begin the 'umrah rites. He said: "Go to Ali and ask him." Then he goes on explaining the hadith, and it was there that Omar said to him: "I have no answer to your question except what Ali says."

Similarly in *Istī'ab*, by means of his chains of narrators, he has narrated from Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib that:

مَآكُنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ يَقُولُ: سَلُونِي غَيْرَ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ³³⁶

"No one among the people has ever said: 'Do ask me [whatever you want]' except Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib."

In *Tārikh Damishq*, Ibn 'Asākir has narrated two hadiths with his chains from Ibn Shibrāma, saying:

مَآكُنْ أَحَدٌ عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ يَقُولُ: سَلُونِي عَنْ مَا بَيْنَ الْوُحَيْنِ إِلَّا عَلَى بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ ³³⁷

"No one has ever said on the pulpit: 'Ask me whatever there is within the Qur'an' except Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib." There is also another hadith narrated from Musayyib similar to this one.

He has narrated a hadith from 'Omayr Ibn Abdullah saying:

خَطَبَنَا عَلِيٌّ (بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ) عَلَى مَنبَرِ الْكُوفَةِ قَالَ: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقْعِدُونِي، فَبَيْنَ الْجَنَّتَيْنِ
بِقِي عِلْمِي

"Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib preached to us on the pulpit of Kūfa Mosque, saying: 'O you the people, do ask me [whatever you want] before missing me, for I have enough knowledge with me.'"

He has also narrated another hadith with his chains from Khālid Ibn 'Ar'ar that he said: "I entered Ruḥbah and saw that some people were sitting there—they were altogether 30 or 40 men—so I joined them. I noticed that Ali too entered the mosque, and he knew all of them except me; I was quite unknown to him. Ali said: 'Isn't there a man among you to ask me a question and benefit from the answer I am going to give him?'"

On another occasion, Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī narrated from Abu Ṭufayl, saying:

I was in the presence of Ali and he said:

سَلُونِي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا أَتَأَلَوْنِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أُعْبِرْتُكُمْ. وَسَلُونِي عَنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهُ مَائِنٌ آيَةً إِلَّا وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِالْبَيْلِ نَزَلَتْ أَمْ يُعَارِأَمُ فِي سَهْلٍ أَمْ فِي جَبَلٍ.³³⁸

"Ask me! By God, you will get an answer to whatever you ask. Do ask me from the Book of God. By God, there is not a single verse but I know whether it was revealed at nighttime or during the day, or whether it was revealed in the desert or on flat land!"

Ibn Hajar ʿAsqalānī has narrated from Wahab Ibn Abdullah and Abu Ṭufayl:

كَانَ عَلَى يَقُولٍ: سَلُونِي، سَلُونِي، سَلُونِي عَنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى فَإِنَّهُ مَائِنٌ آيَةً إِلَّا وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ أَنْزَلَتْ بِالْبَيْلِ أَوْ نَهَارٍ.³³⁹

"Ali used to say: 'Do ask me, do ask me, and ask me about the Book of God, the Almighty. By God, there is no verse but I know whether it was sent down during the daytime or during the night!'"

It has been narrated from ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jalūdī in a speech (*Khutab*) that Imam Ali stood on his feet to give a sermon, and he said:

سَلُونِي فَإِنِّي لَا أَسْأَلُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ وَدُونَ الْعَرْشِ إِلَّا أَجَبْتُ فِيهِ لَا يَقُولُ مَا يَهْدِي إِلَّا جَاهِلٌ مُدَّعٍ أَوْ كَذَّابٌ مُفْتِرٍ.

"Do ask me, because whatever you ask me from the under firmament of God, I will answer it. After me, no one will answer it unless he is ignorant or a sheer liar!"

In the meantime, a man among the crowd stood up. He had a book hung on his neck and it seemed to be the Qurʾan. He had a dark face and was a swarthy man, lean and tall with dark curly hair, as if he was an Arab Jew. In a loud voice he addressed Ali:

أَيُّهَا الدَّعِي مَا لَا يَعْلَمُ، وَالْمَلْدُ مَا لَا يَفْهَمُ، أَنَا السَّائِلُ فَاجِبْ.

"O you who claim that which you know not, and follow what you do not understand, now I have a question. Do answer me."

The companions of Imam Ali as well as the other Shiʿas prepared to attack him, but Ali told them to be patient and said:

دَعُوهُ وَلَا تَجْلُوهُ فَإِنَّ الْكَيْسَ لَا يَقُومُ بِهِ سَخَجُ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَهْ تَطْهَرُ رَاهِبِينَ اللَّهَ.

"Let him alone, let him be in his normal state, because God's signs and proofs cannot be answered in haste and without deep thought."

Then, the Imam turned to that man saying: "Do ask whatever is on your mind, and what is kept in your chest. I am ready to answer all your questions."

The man asked some different questions and the Imam answered them one after another; thus the man nodded in astonishment and testified:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ³⁴⁰

"I bear witness that there is no deity but God, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God."

There is sermon of Imam Ali in *Nahj al-Balāghah* in which he says in the final part:

إِنْ أَمْرًا صَبَّ مُسْتَضْمِبٌ لَا يَحْمِلُهُ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ مُؤْمِنٌ ائْتَمَرَ اللَّهُ قَلْبُهُ لِلْإِيمَانِ، وَلَا يَبِي حُدَيْثًا إِلَّا
صُدُورُ أَمِينَةٍ وَأَخْلَامٌ وَزِينَةُ أَبْنَاءِ النَّاسِ، سَلَوْنِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي، فَلَا تَأْخُذْ بِطَرِيقِ السَّاءِ أَعْلَمُ مِنِّي
بِطَرِيقِ الْأَرْضِ، قَبْلَ أَنْ تُشْفِرَ بِرِجْلَيْهَا قَتْلًا فِي عِطَامِهَا، وَتَذْهَبَ بِأَخْلَامِ قَوْمِي³⁴¹

Indeed our case [the knowledge of religion] is difficult and complicated. No one can bear it except a believer whose heart God has tried with belief. Our traditions will not be preserved except by trustworthy hearts and (men of) solid understanding. O people! Ask me before you miss me, because certainly I am acquainted with the passages of the sky more than with the passages of the earth and before that mischief springs upon its feet that would trample even the nose-string and destroy the wits of the people.

In his explanation about this statement of the Imam, Ibn Abi al-Hadid says:

إِنْ أَمْرًا صَبَّ مُسْتَضْمِبٌ لَا يَحْمِلُهُ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ ائْتَمَرَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى قَلْبُهُ لِلْإِيمَانِ.

Indeed our case is difficult and complicated. No one can bear it except a believer whose heart God has tried with belief. This saying is from the statement of the Holy Qur'an that God states:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ ائْتَمَرَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَى

These believers are those whom God tries their piety in their chests (49:3).

And then after some explanation, he says these statements have been discussed about Ali frequently, and I came across a sermon of his in some books saying:

إِنْ قُرَيْشًا عَلَّيْتَ الشَّلَاةَ فَتَقِيتَ، وَعَلَّيْتَ الْجَاهُ فَهَلَكْتَ، وَعَلَّيْتَ الْمَدَى فَفَلَسْتَ أَلَمْ تَسْمَعُوا
وَيَحْسَبْ قَوْلَهُ عَمَلَى: «وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ»³⁴² قَالَيْنِ الْمَيْلُ وَ
الْمَرْجِعُ عَنْ ذُرِّيَةِ الرَّسُولِ، الَّذِينَ شَهِدَ اللَّهُ وَأَعْلَى بَيِّنَاتِهِمْ قَوْلَى بَيِّنَاتِهِمْ وَأَعْلَى ذُرِّيَّتِهِمْ قَوْلَى
ذُرِّيَّتِهِمْ، وَاخْتَلَفُوا عَلَيْهِمْ؟
أَلَا إِنَّ الذُّرِّيَّةَ أَتَقَانُ أَتَاخُجُّرُهَا، وَذُرُوعُهُ أَتَأَسَافُهَا، وَإِنِّي مِنْ أَلْحَدٍ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الشُّوْءِ مِنَ الشُّوْءِ. كَمَا خَلَّالًا
تَحْتَ التَّرْبِصِ قَبْلَ خَلْقِ الْبَشَرِ، وَقَبْلَ خَلْقِ طَبِئَةِ الْبَشَرِ كَلِمَةً أَتَقَانُ أَتَأَسَافُهَا، لَا أَجْسَامًا نَائِيَةً
إِنْ أَمَرْنَا صَنْبُ مَسْتَضَمِّ لَا يَعْرِفُ كَهْمَهُ إِلَّا ثَلَاثَةٌ: مَلَكٌ مُقَرَّبٌ أَوْ نَبِيٌّ مُرْسَلٌ أَوْ عِبْدٌ مُفْتَحَنٌ اللَّهُ
قَلْبُهُ لِلْإِيمَانِ. فَذَا تَكْشَفَ لَكُمْ رُؤُوسُكُمْ أَوْ وَجْهٌ لَكُمْ أَمْرٌ فَكَلِّمُوهُ وَالْأَلْسِنَةُ كَلَّمُوا، وَزِدُوا
عِلْمَنَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَكَلِّمُوا فِي أَوْسَعِ بَيِّنَاتِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ.

Certainly the Quraysh were after prosperity, but they ended up with adversity; they were after emancipation but were ruined, and were looking for guidance but went astray! Woe upon them! Had they not heard the statement of God: "And those who have believed, also their offspring who have followed them in faith"? (That is, their actions remain there as they are; We will also join their offspring to them and let them be at their level). So there is no way to escape and draw back from the offspring of the Prophet of God, from those whom God gave ranks and positions and whom He assigned a place above that of the others, and whom He made proud to stand erect among the other people, and whom He singled out from among the others and to whom He gave authority.

Let it be known that the offspring of the Prophet are the right and the straight branches, and I am the main tree for those branches; and they are strong and huge trees, and I am their trunk. Now the relation between Ahmad and me is as the relation of light that shines over another light: each one strengthens the other, or they benefit from each other. Before the human beings were created, we were a unique light high in the firmament of God; we were in the shapes of patches of shade though a single light. It was before the structure of man was formed and then grew up in the natural way.

Certainly our affair is too difficult, and fulfilling it is hard. Except for three groups, no one knows the facts of our affair, and they are: the nearest angel to the Divine, a messenger from him, and/or a believer whom God has tried and whose heart He has lifted with the light of belief. Therefore, as some of our mysteries are unveiled to you, an affair has become clear to you. Do accept it, or otherwise be quiet and rescue

yourselves, for in that case you will remain in a vast place between the earth and the sky.

As for the statement of the Imam: "Do ask me before missing me," all people believe that none of the companions had ever said such a thing—never had a learned man said such a thing except Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Birr has mentioned this subject in his book *Istīʿab*, and has said that the purpose of the Imam's saying:

فَلَا أَعْلَمُ بِطَرِيقِ السَّمَاءِ مِثْلَ بِطَرِيقِ الْأَرْضِ.

"My knowledge about Heaven is much greater than my knowledge of the roads of the earth" is to declare his special knowledge about upcoming events, especially of the changes in affairs. The manifest sign was his constant information about the unseen—not once or twice, but time and time again. These signs were so correct that there remained no way to doubt them—they depended on his vast knowledge and were not said at random!

Some scholars have interpreted these sayings in different ways. They have said they are concerned with divine laws and jurisprudence, not worldly matters; so they have taken those affairs as divine matters, but others consider them to be about earthly issues. Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has narrated a fair hadith by the preachers in Baghdad at the time of al-Nāṣir al-Dīn Allāh, Abi al-ʿAbbās Ahmad Ibn al-Mustaḍʿī bi-Allāh, who claimed something extraordinary on the pulpit, and once one of the most learned Shiʿa in Baghdad, called Ahmad Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Kazzī, disgraced him in the middle of his speech, and brought the subject to an end by this reaction.³⁴³

Moreover, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, when explaining the first disgracing, which is said to refer to Omar, and Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār has rejected it in his book *Mughnī*, and Sayyid Murtaḍā ʿAlam al-Hudā in his book *Shāfi* has proved it again. He narrates from ʿAbd al-Jabbār that he accepts the hadith of

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي

and the hadith stating: "Indeed the whole of knowledge is with me," as well as the hadith below:

لَوْ نَزَّلْتُ لِي الْوَسَادَةَ لَحَكَمْتُ بَيْنَ أَهْلِ التَّوْرَةِ بِتَوْرَاتِهِمْ وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِالْإِنْجِيلِ وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الزَّبُورِ بِزُبُورِهِمْ وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الْقُرْآنِ بِقُرْآنِهِمْ.

"If they asked me to judge among the people, I would judge the people of the Torah with their Book, and the people of Bible with their

own book, and so I would do with the people of the Qur'an," and finally the hadith:

كُنْتُ إِذَا سَأَلْتُ أَحَدَهُمْ، وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُ الْبَيْتَ.

"If I were asked, I would answer; otherwise I would not say anything."

'Abd al-Jabbār has mentioned that he has taken them as the truest hadiths in the world.

In any case, since the demise of Imam Ali, many people have tried to claim these statements of Imam Ali, but all of them have been disgraced by the people.

Among them is Zamakhsharī, who has narrated in *Kashshāf* from Qattādah that when he entered Kūfa, the people gathered around him. In these circumstances, he told the people: "Do ask me whatever you want." Abu Ḥanīfa, who was a young boy present there, said: "Ask Qattādah whether the ant of Solomon was male or female." They asked him, but he could not answer; he was dumfounded.

Abu Ḥanīfa said: "It was a female ant." They asked: "How do you know that?" He said:

I know that by the Book of God, where it says

قَالَتْ بَيْتَةً

"the she ant said" (here the verb

قَالَتْ

refers to the female gender), because if it was a male ant, he would say

قَالَ بَيْتَةً

which refers to a male ant. However, the word

بَيْتَةً

like some other nouns, such as

سَمَاءٌ

and

شَاةٌ

(pigeon and sheep) refers to birth genders, male and female. So to make it clear whether it is male or female, one must add "he or she" to the noun. And in the case of a pronoun, it must be used with the pronoun "he" or "she" to make the gender clear.³⁴⁴

Majlisī has narrated in *Biḥār al-Anwār* something similar from Ibn Ḥājib that some feminine nouns such as

شاهنامه

and

نملة

are originally feminine, and the speaker has taken them to be female. Hence he had suspected that God's statement

كَانَ نَمْلَةً

was about a female creature.

Then Majlisi says: "This statement of Hājib is correct, and Sayyid Raḍī and some others have approved of it." So praise and laudation be to God that He disgraced one who claimed to be in the position of Imam Ali: one in his youth and with such little knowledge wanted to take the Imam's position and say to the people: "Do ask me!"³⁴⁵

Further, Majlisi has narrated from *al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaḡim* by Bayādhī 'Āmili:

Once Ibn Juzī said on the pulpit

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقْفُوْنِي

"Ask me before missing me." Then, a woman from among the people said: "It is narrated that one night Ali traveled from Medina to Madā'in, and after giving the corpse of Salmān—who had just died—the final ritual washing and shrouding and burying him, he returned to Medina on the same night." Ibn Juzī said: "Yes, it is narrated in the hadiths." The woman said: "And when Othman was killed, for three days his corpse was left unnoticed while Ali was present." Ibn Juzī said: "Yes, that is right."

Then the woman said: "So one of them, either Ali or Othman, was wrong and had made a mistake." Ibn Juzī said: "If you have left your house without the permission of your husband, may God's curse be upon you, but if you come with his permission then may he be cursed by God!"

The woman asked: "Let us know whether 'Āyisha fought Ali with the permission of the Prophet or without his permission."³⁴⁶ The woman's questions caused Ibn Juzī to stop his lecture, for he had no more to tell the woman.³⁴⁷

'Allāmah Amīnī has narrated a sermon from Omar in *Jābiyah*, saying:

Whoever wants to ask anything from the Qur'an, let him go to Obay Ibn Ka'b, and anyone who wants to know something about the lawful and unlawful, go to Ma'ādh Ibn Jabal. And he who wants to ask about the

quality of and quantity of inheritance should go to Zayd Ibn Thābit, and whoever wants to question us must come to me. Because I am the treasurer; God, glory to Him in the highest, has appointed me as the treasurer and the divider of the properties of the people.

And then he narrates a detailed explanation concerning this hadith, as well as a list of the books that scholars have written concerning this subject, such as those of Bayhaqī and Hākim, who wrote *ʿIqd al-Farid*, and some other books. Amīnī continues:

This sermon, which is certainly narrated by the caliph, is in some way or another about those people, and Hākim and Dhahabī accept its correctness. Omar has also confessed that the three sections of knowledge are related to them; the caliph himself has no authority on it, but he is considered the treasurer of the property of God. Is it acceptable after the Prophet for the caliph, who is supposed to explain God's Book and the traditions, to be void of knowledge?

So what a big difference between the person who admits that he knows little about the Qur'an and traditions of the prophets, and the person who frequently says:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ لَا تَسْأَلُونِي، وَلَنْ تَسْأَلُوا بَعْدِي بِشَيْءٍ.³⁴⁸

"Ask me before the time you cannot ask, and you will never [find] anyone like me." And another saying that:

لَا تَسْأَلُونِي عَنْ آيَةٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَلَا عَنْ سُنةٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَّا أَنَا أَتُكَلِّمُكُمْ بِذَلِكَ.

"You will not ask me about any verses of the Book of God or the traditions of the Prophet of God unless I will answer all your questions."³⁴⁹

And this saying of his:

سَلُونِي، وَاللَّهِ لَا تَسْأَلُونِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ يَكُونُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ إِلَّا أُخْبِرْتُكُمْ بِهِ. وَسَلُونِي عَنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا مِنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِأَيِّ لَيْلٍ نَزَّلَتْ أَمْ نَهَارٍ، فِي سَهْلٍ أَمْ فِي جَبَلٍ.³⁵⁰

"Ask me, by God whatever you ask me [from now] till the Resurrection Day, I will inform you of that. And do ask me questions from the Book of God; by God there is no verse but I know whether it has been revealed at night or during the day; or whether it has been revealed on the surface of the land or on a mountain!"

And his saying:

الْأَرْجُلُ يُنَالُ فَيَقْطَعُ وَيَنْفَعُ جُلَسَاءَهُ³⁵¹

"Is there not a man to ask so that he benefits from it and then benefits his companions?"

And in his saying:

وَاللهِ مَا نَزَلَتْ آيَةٌ إِلَّا وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ فِيهِمْ أَنْزِلْتُ، وَلَمَّا أَنْزِلْتُ، إِنَّ رَبِّي وَهَبَ لِي قَلْبًا عَظِيمًا، وَلِسَانًا
سُورًا³⁵²

"By God, there has not been revealed any verse unless I know what it is about and where it has been revealed. Indeed God has bestowed on me a reflective heart and a questioning tongue."

And his statement:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي، سَلُونِي عَنِ كِتَابِ اللهِ، وَمَا مِنْ آيَةٍ إِلَّا وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ أَنْزِلْتُ بِخَبِيرٍ
جَبَلٍ أَوْ سَهْلٍ أَوْ بَرٍّ أَوْ بَحْرٍ، وَسَلُونِي عَنِ الْقِيَمَةِ، فَتَأْمَنُ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ مَنْ كَتَمَهَا وَمَنْ يَقْتُلُ فِيهَا.

"Ask me before missing me, ask me about the Book of God, for there is no verse but I know where it descended—whether it was revealed on a mountain or on the surface of the earth. And do ask me about the events and seditions of the future; there will not happen anything, but I will anticipate it beforehand. I understand who has set up a sedition and who has been killed in it!"

And his other statement, such as:

سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي، فَإِنَّمَا بَيْنَ الْجُودِ مِثْقَالُ حَبِّ خَمْصَةٍ، هَذَا كِتَابُ رَسُولِ اللهِ
صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هَذَا مَا رَفَعَنِي رَسُولُ اللهِ وَقَارًا. فَوَاللهِ لَوْ لَيْتَ لِي الْوَسَادَةُ جَلَسْتُ
عَلَيْهَا، لَأَكْبَتُ أَهْلَ التَّوْرَةِ بِتَوَارِيهِمْ وَأَهْلَ الْإِنْجِيلِ فَيَقُولَانِ صَدَقَ عَلَى قَذَاكَ كَمَا بَيَّأَنَزَلُ
اللهُ فِي وَأَنْتُمْ تَسَلُونُ الْكِتَابَ أَقْلًا تَفْقِدُونَ³⁵³

Do ask me, because both sides of my chest are full of knowledge; this is a basket full of knowledge. It has truly come to me by the saliva of the Prophet of God; it has been put in my mouth little by little as a chick is fed by the bird—it is he who has taught me knowledge.

By God, if they double the cushions of my seat for leaning back to govern, I will judge the people of the Torah with their Book, and I

will give my verdict about the people of the Bible according to their Bible, so that if God lets those two books speak, they would say: "Ali was right in his judgment; he judged what God has stated in us." And you will recite the Book and then ponder upon its statement.

Imam Ali announced these words while wearing the coat of mail of the Prophet, and hanging his sword on his shoulder. He was wearing the turban of the Prophet and sitting on the upper seat of the pulpit while pointing to his chest, meaning that it was full of knowledge.

And Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib said:

لَمْ يَكُنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الصَّحَابَةِ يَقُولُ: سَلُونِي إِلَّا عَلِيٌّ بْنُ أَبِي تَالِبٍ.³⁵⁴

"None of the companions said "ask me" except Ali Ibn Abi Tālib.

وَكُنْ إِذَا سُئِلَ عَنْ مَسْأَلَةٍ، يَكُونُ فِيهَا كَلَامُكَ أَصْحَابًا وَيَقُولُ.³⁵⁵

إِذَا الْشُكْلَاتُ صَدَّيْنِ لِي كَشَفْتُ حَقَائِقَهُمَا بِالنَّظَرِ 1

كَأَنِّي بَرَقْتُ فِي تَحْيِيلِ الشَّوَابِ عِمَاءٌ لَا يَخْطِئُهَا الْبَصَرُ 2

مُخْتَفَةً بِبُيُوتِ الْأُمُورِ وَخَفْتُ عَلَيْهَا صَوَاحِبَ الْفِكَرِ 3

لِنَا كَيْفَ بَقِيَّةِ الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَلَامِ النَّاسِ الْبَاقِي الذِّكْرِ 4

وَقَلْبًا إِذَا اسْتَطَقَّتْهُ الشُّؤْنُ أَتَمَّ عَلَيْهِ أَبْوَابُ دُرَرٍ 5

وَأَنْتَ بِإِثْمَةٍ³⁵⁶ فِي الرِّجَالِ لِي تَسَائِلُ هَذَا وَذَا مَا الْحَبَرُ 6

وَأَكُنِّي مَذْرُوبَ الْأَصْفَرَيْنِ أَبِينُ مَعَ مَا مَضَى، مَا غَبَرُ 7

1. When I am faced with a problem, I discover its fact by my view,
2. So by rightly picturing it in my mind, when a dull and fearsome affair comes to me, which is hard to discover, and
3. It is hidden under numerous screens and coverings, I apply my right opinions to unveil it,
4. With a tongue like a roaring male camel, when it is excited, comes out of its mouth, or like the Yemeni's sharp steel sword,
5. Or with a chest full of different assets and arts, when it is asked, it pours out the precious pearls (to the questioners),
6. And I am not such a man to mix with this [unlearned] man or that one, and to ask them about the answer [of the questions]!
7. However, I have a sharp tongue and hard heart, and I can clearly see the future events by means of the past happenings.'

Important to Notice

I have come to the conclusion that there is no one in history with more courage than Imam Ali to face events and problems, to answer and solve the most difficult problems of the people, and among them to announce: "Ask me any question you have." He was like the great Prophet, who constantly said: "Do ask whatever you want, ask and ask."

وَسَلُّونِي، وَلَا تَسْأَلُونِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَتَيْتُكُمْ بِهِ³⁵⁷

"And ask me, and do ask me about something to make you alert about that."

Likewise Imam Ali inherited his knowledge from the Prophet. He also inherited his other generous attitudes from him. They are two branches grown from one unique trunk. Whoever claimed to be like Imam Ali after him, he disgraced himself, went astray, and revealed his ignorance in this way, such as the following:

1. Ibrahim Ibn Hishām Ibn Ismā'īl Ibn Hishām Ibn Walīd Ibn Mughayrah Makhzumī Qarashī, the governor of Mecca and Medina and the emir of the *hajj* of Hishām Ibn 'Abd al-Malik, who took the *hajj* pilgrimage along with the other common people in 107 AH and made a sermon at Minā. Then, after his preaching, he said:

سَلُّونِي، فَأَنَا ابْنُ الْوَجِيدِ، لَا تَسْأَلُوا أَحَدًا أَعْلَمَ مِنِّي.

"Ask me [whatever you want], because I am the unique one born in the world; you will not ask anyone wiser than I am!" Right then, an Iraqi man stood up and asked: "Is *odhiya* (a kind of sacrificing ritual) necessary?" But he could not answer his question, so he ended his sermon and climbed down the pulpit.³⁵⁸

2. Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān. Ibrahim Ḥarbī said:

Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān sat down and said:

سَلُّونِي عَمَّا دُونَ الْعَرْشِ إِلَى قُبَاتَا.³⁵⁹

"Ask me about whatever is beneath the firmament: about your foods, the foods we are hiding in our houses."

A man asked: "Let us know, when Adam was on the *hajj*, who shaved his head?" Muqātil [regretting his claim] answered: "But this is not your concern, because God wanted to involve me in the selfishness that has encircled me!"³⁶⁰

3. Sufyān Ibn 'Uyaynah has narrated that one day Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān said:

سَلُونِي عَمَّا فَوْقَ الْعَرْشِ

"Ask me about anything under the firmament of God." So a man said to him: "O Abu al-Hasan, tell me whether the intestines of the ants and the small ants are in the front or in the back of them." Shaykh Muqātil was too baffled to answer him.

Sufyān says: "In my opinion this event was a punishment for his being proud of himself!"

4. Mūsā Ibn Hārūn Hammāl says:

I was informed that Qutādah had recently entered Kūfa, and then he was taken to a session prepared in his honor to rest and preach, so he began his preaching and, as was expected, said:

سَلُونِي عَنْ سُنَنِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى أَجِيبَكُمْ

"Ask me about the traditions of the Prophet of God so that I answer your questions." Some people said to Abu Ḥanīfa: "Now you stand up and ask him something." So Abu Ḥanīfa stood up and said:

O Abu al-Khaṭṭāb, what is your opinion about a man who was away from his wife for a period of time and his wife had married another man? And then, after some time her husband returned, went home, and discovered the situation and said to his wife: "O you adulterer! Did you marry another man while I am still alive?" They were disputing when her new husband arrived and said to the woman: "O you adulterer, did you marry me while you already had a husband?" So what is the solution in this situation?

Qutādah asked: "What! Has this really happened?"

Abu Ḥanīfa answered: "Even if it has not happened, we are disposed to such an incident."

Qutādah said: "Do not ask me such questions; only ask me about the Qur'an."

Abu Ḥanīfa said:

Then what is your opinion about this statement of Allah?

كَلَّ الَّذِي عِنْدَ عِلْمٍ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُم بِهِ مِنْهُ

"He who had some knowledge of the Book said [to Solomon]: 'I present the couch of Bilqis here to you before winking your eyes.'"

Qutādah said: "He was a man from the children of Sulaymān Ibn Dawūd's uncle, and he knew the Highest Names [of God]."

Abu Ḥanīfa asked: "Did Sulaymān himself know those Highest Names [of God]?"

Qutādah answered: "No, he didn't."

Abu Ḥanīfa said: "Glory be to God! How is it possible for a man to be more learned than the messengers of God?"

Qutādah said: "I am not going to answer for you a question about *tafsir*; ask me only about those questions that people disagree on."

Abu Ḥanīfa said: "Are you a believer?"

Qutādah said: "I hope so."

Abu Ḥanīfa said: "Why did you not answer: 'Yes, I am a believer,' as God has stated that Abraham did when He addressed him: 'Do you not believe?' He said: 'Yes, I do believe.'"

Qutādah said: "Do take me out of this town. By God, I will never again enter your town."³⁶¹

5. He explains the question of Abu Ḥanīfa concerning whether the ant was male or female. which we have already explained.

6. 'Obaydullah Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hārūn says:

In Mecca, I heard from Shāfi'ī saying:

سَلُونِي عَمَّا شِئْتُمْ أَجِدُ لَكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِ

"Ask me whatever you want; I will answer you by the Book of God and the rule of His Prophet." Then he was asked: "O Aba Abdullah, what is your opinion about a pilgrim in the state of *iḥrām* killing a bee?" He answered:

وَمَا آتَاكُمْ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ³⁶²

"Act upon whatever the Prophet has given you."³⁶³

In *Jāmi' al-Akhbār*, Majlisī has narrated that a man went to Ali and said: "I have come to you to ask four questions." The Imam said: "Do ask me, even if you have forty questions." He said:

أعبرني: مَا الصَّعْبُ وَمَا الْأَصْعَبُ؟ وَمَا الْقَرِيبُ وَمَا الْأَقْرَبُ؟ وَمَا الْحَبُّبُ وَمَا الْأَنْجَبُ؟ وَمَا الْوَاجِبُ وَمَا الْأَوْجِبُ؟

"Let me know what the difficult thing is, and what is more difficult; and what is near, and what is nearer; what is amazement and what is more amazement; and what is obligatory and what is more obligatory."

The Imam said: "The difficult thing is a sin, and what is more difficult is the loss of its reward; near means whatever is on the way, and nearer is the death approaching you; the amazing thing is this world, and more amazing is our unawareness in our lives; and obligatory is repentance, and avoiding committing sins is more obligatory."

It is narrated that a man went to Imam Ali and said: "I have traveled for 70 miles to ask you 70 words." The Imam said: "Do ask whatever you want to." The man said:

أَيُّ شَيْءٍ وَأَعْظَمُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ؟ وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ وَأَوْسَعُ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ؟ وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ وَأَضْعَفُ مِنَ الْيَتِيمِ؟ وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ وَأَحْزَنُ مِنَ الْكَلْبِ؟ وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ وَأَبْزَدُ مِنَ الزَّمْهِرِ؟ وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ وَأَغْنَى مِنَ الْخَيْرِ؟ وَأَيُّ أَقْسَى مِنَ الْحَجَرِ؟
الحَجَرُ؟³⁶⁴

What thing is bigger than the sky?

What [or who] is weaker than an orphan?

What is hotter than fire?

What is colder than the intense cold [40 days after the winter solstice]?

What is more affluent than the sea, and what is harder than a rock?

The Imam stated: "Accusing an innocent person is bigger than the sky; truth is more enormous than the earth; back-biters are weaker than an orphan; greediness is hotter than fire; taking your need to a mean person is colder than the worst cold; a satisfied body is richer than the sea; and an unbeliever's heart is harder than a rock."

It stated in *Shirāt al-Mustaqīm* that Qāsim Ibn Salām has narrated from Abu Bakr preaching in the mosque of Medina and saying:

أَعِينُونِي وَقَوِّمُونِي³⁶⁵

"Do help me and guide me on the straight path." So it is clear that if someone needs the community, he needs the Imam more.³⁶⁶

In *al-Ghadir*, it is narrated from Khaṭīb in *al-Ruwāt* by al-Mālik, and from Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, and from Qurṭubī in his *Tafsīr*,

and by means of an authentic chain from Abdullah Omar, that Omar learned the *Sūrah al-Baqarah* in 12 years' time, and then when the *sūrah* came to an end, as thanksgiving, he slaughtered a camel.³⁶⁷

In volume 11 of *Knowing the Imams* we explained that Omar did not know the meaning of *kalālih* (one deceased without heirs). Time and again, he went to the Prophet and asked about it, but he could not learn it. In the end the Holy Prophet told him: "I think that you will die before learning this!" Then, he asked his daughter, Hafṣah, to ask it of the Prophet and she did. The Prophet stated:

عَاذِيْ اَبَاكَ بِعَلْمِهِ وَقَوْلِهِ: عَاذَرَاهُ بِمَعْنَاهَا.

"I think that your father cannot understand its meaning." His straight statement was: "I do not see him knowing it while he is alive!"³⁶⁸

It is written in *al-Ghadir* that Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* has narrated from 'Amīd Ibn 'Omayr that Abu Mūsā Ash'arī asked permission three times to meet Omar, but every time he found him busy at something and he turned back.

Omar said: "Did you not hear Abdullah Ibn Qays saying to let him enter?" They called Abu Mūsā and he presented himself. Omar asked him: "What caused you to return?" He answered: "We have been commanded by the Prophet of God that we are not allowed to enter and then to turn back." Omar said: "You have to bring a proof for what you say; otherwise I will give you lashes" (and it is re-phrased somewhere that Omar said: "By God, you have to bring a witness for what you claim; otherwise I will punish you so much as to injure your back and stomach").

Abu Mūsā came out from the session with Omar and went straight to a session of the Anṣār. The Anṣār [went to Omar] and said: "We will not bear witness for that case," but only Abu Sa'īd Khudrī told Omar: "That is true, we have been commanded by the Prophet to do so." Omar said:

خَفِيَ عَلَيَّ هَذَا مِنْ أَمْرِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْفَتَانِي عَنْهُ الصُّغْنُ بِالْأَسْوَابِ.³⁶⁹

"This command of the Prophet of God was unknown to me. At the time of the Prophet of God, being occupied in business in the markets did not give me a chance to learn the hadiths and traditions of the Prophet of God."

In two different places in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Imam Ali says: "The Household of the Prophet, to whom people must refer, are the source of knowledge and free from ignorance. In other words, they are the kernel of knowledge and rightfulness." It is in *Nahj al-Balāghah*³⁷⁰

from where he says "the kernel of knowledge and the rightfulness..." until the end of the sermon, and again in sermon 145, which we address here:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَعْرِفُوا الرُّفْدَ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي تَرَكْتُمْ، وَلَنْ تَأْخُذُوا بِطَلْقِ الْكِتَابِ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي تَقْضُهُ، وَلَنْ تَمْسُكُوا بِهِ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي يَبْهَتُهُ فَاتَمِسُوا ذَلِكَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَهْلِهِ فَهُمْ عَيْشُ الْعِلْمِ وَتَوْتُ الْجَهْلِ. فَمُ الَّذِينَ يَخْرُجُ حُكْمُهُمْ عَنْ عِلْمِهِمْ، وَصَمْتُهُمْ عَنْ مَطْلِقِهِمْ، وَظَاهِرُهُمْ عَنْ بَاطِنِهِمْ، لَا يَخْلُقُونَ الدِّينَ وَلَا يَخْلُقُونَ فِيهِ هَوْنِيَّتَهُمْ فَأَمِدْ صَادِقٌ وَصَلِيْتُ تَأْتِي.³⁷¹

...and you should know that you will never know guidance unless you know who has abandoned it, you will never abide by the pledges of the Qur'an unless you know who has broken them, and you will never cling to it unless you know who has forsaken it. Seek these things from those who own them, because they are the lifespring of knowledge and the death of ignorance. They are the people whose commands will disclose to you their [extent of] knowledge, their silence will disclose their [capacity for] speaking, and their outer appearance will disclose their inner self. They do not go against religion, and do not differ from one other about it, while religion among them is a truthful witness and a silent speaker.

One day a man surprisingly asked: "How did these usurpers of the caliphate oppose a man so full of knowledge and wisdom?" Then a learned man among the people in the session answered him:

It is quite clear, because the Holiness himself said:

الْعِلْمُ أَعْنَاءُ مَا جَهِلُوا.³⁷²

"The people are enemies of what they do not know."

You find ignorance and dullness in the opponents. However, you witness intuitive and acquired knowledge and knowledge by presence in the Household of Muhammad. So the enmity of the opponents is due to their jealousy toward the Household; they are not after knowledge, so they plunge into ignorance.

Imam Ali states in one of his elegies:

لَا فَضْلَ إِلَّا لِأَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ أُنْهَمُ عَلَى الْقُدْسِ بِإِسْحَاقِ أَوْلَادِهِ 1
وَقِيَمَةِ الرُّبَا نَأَقْدُ كُلَّ يَمِينَةٍ وَاجْهَلُونَ لِأَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ أَعْنَاءُ 2

مَنْ يَعْلَمُ وَلَا يَتَّبِعْ لَدَيْهِ لَا النَّاسَ مَوْتَى وَأَهْلَ الْعِلْمِ أَحْيَاءُ. 3³⁷³

1. There is no priority and nobility except for the men of knowledge, for indeed they are the guide to lead [people] to the path to prosperity,
2. And every man is valued by virtue of his knowledge; and the ignorant are the enemies of the people of knowledge,
3. Stand up and seek for knowledge, for we are after nothing but knowledge—the public are dead but the people of knowledge are alive!

“Self-love” is an instinct of the human being, and a knowledgeable person loves his knowledge as an attribute of himself, so people naturally try to challenge ignorance, which is the source of all wickedness. By the same token, if a person is ignorant, he also likes his ignorance and himself. In his imagination, he considers his opponents defective, although they are highly educated people, and to make the matters worse, he tries to destroy them. He sees those pure people with such illuminated faces as dark and impure.³⁷⁴

حَسَدُوا الْقَتْلَى إِذْ نَالُوا أَفْضَلَهُ فَالْأَسْ أَعْدَاءُ لَهُ وَخُصُومُ 1
كَفَرُوا بِرَأْسِ الْحَسَنِاءِ فَلَنْ رُوجِيَهَا حَسَدًا وَبُغْضًا إِنَّهُ لَدَمِيمٌ. 2³⁷⁵

1. They were jealous of this young man, because they did not understand his superiority, so people were his opponents and enemies,
2. Like the woman who is a rival of a beautiful woman, they, through their jealousy, consider her to be ugly.

يَا سَائِلِي عَنْ عَلٍ وَالَّذِي صَلَّوْا بِهِ مِنَ الشُّوْءِ مَا قَالُوا وَمَا عَمِلُوا 1
لَمْ يَغْرِفُوهُ فَضَادُوهُ لِأَجْهَلُوا وَالنَّاسُ كُلُّهُمْ أَعْدَاءُ مَا جَهِلُوا. 2³⁷⁶

1. O you who are asking me about Ali and about his immorality that they speak and act against,
2. They did not know him; they became his enemies through their ignorance, for people are altogether enemies to their unawareness!

Lack of knowledge about the Imam leads one to the dark abyss of Satan and his temptations, and the outcome is oppression. O God, for the sake of the good in Your way, and for the sake of the pure desiring to meet Your blissful features, help us to follow the path to

Your Monotheism and come to know better our Master, Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, and obey his commands.

O God, wherever we dashed, it was just toward Your site, and wherever we reached, we noticed that You are there.

Any Qibla that we desired to pick for our worshipping place,

We saw, within that place, Your beautiful features rest!³⁷⁷

O God, for the sake of al-Muṣṭafā Muhammad, and al-Murtaḍā Ali, al-Baṭīl Fāṭimah, and al-Sibṭayn Hasan and Husayn, for the sake of Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Ali, and al-Bāqir Muhammad, al-Ṣādiq Jaʿfar, and al-Kāzim Mūsā, al-Riḍā Ali, and al-Taḳī Muhammad, al-Naḳī Ali, and al-Zakī al-ʿAskarī al-Hasan; and for the sake of al-Mahdī al-Hādī Ṣāhib al-Zamān and Khalīfah al-Raḥmān and Qāṭi' al-Burhān, and the Imam of al-Ins and al-Jānn, upon them all be peace and blessing, help us to follow those with whom You are satisfied, and keep us away from those upon whom is Your wrath, and make us believers with certainty to follow Muhammad Your Prophet and the Master of the Faithful, Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib and his pure lineage, the Imams, and make us believe in their return, and be among those who are waiting for their commands. O God, curse those who altered Your religion, and mocked Your Imam and changed Your rules and commands. O God, curse all the enemies of Muhammad from now to the Day of Judgment.

Praise and thanks be to God that by His assistance, this volume of *Knowing the Imams* (volume 12) has come to an end on the tenth of Jamādi al-Awlā, 1408 Hijrī Qamarī (lunar) [1987], an hour and a half before sunset in the Holy city of Mashhad. Peace and thousands of blessings be upon Muhammad and his pure Descendants.

By the humblest of the humble, the poorest of the poor, al-Sayyid Muhammad al-Husayn al-Husayni al-Ṭihrānī, may God pardon and forgive his sins and bless him.

NOTES

1. There are many instances of this kind of statement, such as: "God's knowledge about anything is already within that particular thing; that is, He need not reiterate His attention to it; He has the knowledge"; and Qur'an 29:3:

فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ.

So God shall surely ascertain those who are truthful and He shall surely ascertain the liars; this means that two groups, the truthful and the liars, who are in God's prior knowledge will come into existence in accordance with His knowledge. And similarly, chapter 57, verse 25 of al-Hadid:

وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ

"So that God may know those who support Him and His messengers in their absence"; that is, subjects known in God's knowledge come into extra-mental existence.

2. Shaykh Mufid, in *Irshād* (lithograph, 1285 AH), p. 173, besides mentioning the verse

الرَّغَيْبُ الرُّومِيُّ فِي أَغْنَى الْأَرْضِ

which represents the hidden knowledge of the Prophet, has explained some more of his unseen knowledge. For example, his knowledge about the Battle of Badr even before its occurrence: ...these hosts will be defeated and turn their backs (54:45). As God had already declared, it happened without any difference. And another example is verse 27 in chapter 48, *Fath*: ...so that enter the Hallowed Mosque safely and with no fear; so He knew that which you did not know, thus, [by the ceasefire for you at Hudaibiyya] He granted a near victory; so the event took place without any difference. And the next examples are verses 1 and 2 from chapter 110, *al-Naṣr*: ...when the aid of God comes, and the victory, and you see the people entering God's religion in throngs. This occurred as God stated it. Another example is verse 8 in chapter 58, *al-Mujādilah*: ...and they talk among themselves: "[If he is a messenger] why then does God not chastise us for what we say?" Here, God informs us of some of the hypocrites' intentions. Similarly, there are verses 6 and 7 of chapter 62, *al-Jum'ah*: Say, "O you the Jews, if you claim to be the adherents of God ahead of people, then long for death if you are so truthful." But they will never long for it, because of what their hands have already done; And God is well aware of the wrongdoers. Everything went as God had declared, because

there was not a single person among them who dared to meet death. The very absence of their wish to die proved the prediction of the Prophet. There are a great many cases concerning this perception of the Prophet on many occasions, which would require great time and patience to explain here. One of the numerous claims in the Qur'an that the news of the Messenger of Islam and of the other messengers would be related to their unseen knowledge is verse 179 in chapter 3 of *Āl Imrān*: *...and it is not the role of God to acquaint you with the Unseen, but God chooses anyone He will from among His messengers.* And the next one is in verse 49 in chapter 11, which says: *...this is the account of the Unseen We are revealing to you. Neither you nor your people knew that before this, so be patient; the ultimate is to those who are heedful.* God has stated this verse after telling the story of Noah, the deluge, and the drowning of the rebels.

Another one is verse 102 in chapter 12 of *Yūsuf*: *...this [event] is the tidings of the Unseen that We reveal to you. You were not present when they agreed on their affair and plotted.* This verse is stated in the final part of the story, after all the events of *Yūsuf*: being taken away by his brothers, being thrown to the bottom of the well, being sold to a stranger, and then becoming a ruler in Egypt, and finally rejoining his father.

Another example is verse 44 from chapter 3, *Āl Imrān*: *...this [statement] is of the news of the Unseen, We are revealing to you, for you were not with them when they were casting their quills [as lots, to see] which of them would be entrusted with Mary, and you were not with them when they were disputing.* This verse is given after the birth of Maryam, and the supplication of Zakariyyā, when he was too old.

Another verse is verse 3 from chapter 66, *al-Taḥrīm*: *...and when the Messenger confided a matter to one of his wives and she spread it around, so God informed the matter to him, and he let some of it be known, and overlooked part. However when he informed her of a part, she asked: "Who told you about this?" He said, "I was told of it by God, the aware, informed."* This verse was sent down concerning Ḥafṣah, the daughter of Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb; and chapter of *al-Taḥrīm* was sent down concerning both ʿĀyisha and Ḥafṣah.

The next one is verse 27 from chapter 48, *al-Fath*: *...certainly God fulfilled the dream of His Messenger, so that now if God desires, you can, while your heads are shaven and [nails] clipped, enter the Hallowed Mosque safely and with no fear.*

Another one is verse 85 from chapter 28, *al-Qiṣaṣ*: ...*He Who ordained for you the [recitation of] the Qur'an can surely return you to [your] destination (Makkah). Say, "My Lord is quite aware as to who are guided and who are in plain error."*

Some other cases are those that the Holy Prophet has mentioned about the Qur'an, as when he says: "Let anyone who can, bring a chapter or 10 chapters similar to these verses of the Qur'an"; however, no one could do that. In verse 38 in chapter 10, *Yūnus*, He states: ...[do they say he has made it up?] Say, "If you are right, then produce a Sūra like it."

And verse 13 in chapter 11, *Hūd*, says: ...say, "Well then [you too] bring ten Sūras made up like it if you are so truthful. Another verse is that which the Prophet has said concerning victory in war and the booty the Muslims fighters would gain; it is in verse 20, chapter 48, *al-Fath*: ...God has promised you to achieve many [other] spoils and you will gain them.

Another verse states that God will save His Excellency from all harms and afflictions: in verse 67, chapter 5, He states: ...may God protect you from people. And there is verse 42, chapter 5, *al-Mā'idah*, when He states: ...if you put them off, they will never harm you in any way.

Another example is the anticipation of the Imam concerning the blasphemy of Abu Lahab and his situation of being in the Fire; all this is in chapter 111, *al-Masad*, verse 3: ...he will soon be burnt in the flame of hell. Another one is God's saving the Prophet from the unbelieving Arabs when the Muslims were tortured in the burning sands of the Arabian fields, as verses 94 and 95, in chapter 15, *al-Hijr*, say: ...therefore, proclaim what you are commanded to, and turn away from the idolaters; We defend you against such scoffers.

Some other cases are in the chapter *al-Fath*, such as: ...[the Bedouins who lagged behind the war will tell you,] "Our property and our families kept us [too] busy" [to accompany you]; [...those who lagged behind jihād will say,] "when you set out to fetch the spoils of war," [Allow us to follow you;] also, [then they will say,] "Never, but you envy us."

In the book *al-Rāh-i Sa'ādat* (Qum: Intishārāt Islamiyya, 1369) written by the Ayatollah Hāj Mirzā Abu al-Hasan Sha'rānī, on pages 49-76, he has written about 27 events concerning the Prophet's predictions through his hidden knowledge.

3. There is also another view about the location of al-Adna al-Arḍ saying that it is a land near Qusṭanṭaniyya. For more on this view see *Nūr Malakūt al-Qurʾan* (Mashhad: Intishārāt Allama Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1417 AH), vol. 4, pp. 317–19.
4. Muhammad H. Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾan* (n.p. Intishārāt Islamiyya, 1386 AH), vol. 20, p. 135.
5. Ali Ibn al-Husayn al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-Dhiḥab* (Egypt: Maṭbaʿa al-Saʿādat, 1367 AH), vol. 3, pp. 353–54.
6. Quṭb Rāwandī, *al-Kharāyij wa Jarāyih* (lithograph, n.d.), pp. 228–29. This book has been printed along with Majlisī's *Arbaʿin* and *Kifāyat al-Aṭhar* of Shaykh Ali Ibn Muhammad Khazzāz in a single copy; apart from that, Majlisī has printed it in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 582, chapter of *Kharāj*.
7. Hāshim Baḥrānī, *Madinat al-Muʿājiz* (lithograph), pp. 128–29, hadith no. 1633.
8. *al-Manāqib* (lithography, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 433.
9. *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (Beirut: Dar al-Maʿarifat), vol. 1, p. 81; instead of writing *taqliba*, he has printed *thaqlaba*, and instead of Abdullah it is written ʿUbayd.
10. This verse appears in five different places in the Qurʾan and it means: "Not a load-carrier carries the next one's load." The allusion is that everyone is responsible for his own action.
11. His biography is written in some books, and they have explained his chain of relation in *al-Iṣṭabāh fī Tamyiz al-Ṣiḥāba* and *Usd al-Ghābah* as follows: Saʿd Ibn ʿIbādah Ibn Dalīm Ibn Ḥāritha Ibn Harām Ibn Khuzaymah Ibn Thaʿlabat Ibn Ṭarīf Ibn al-Khazraj Ibn Sāʿidat Ibn Kaʿb Ibn Khazraj Anṣārī Sayyid al-Khazraj. See Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣṭabāh* (Egypt: Maṭbaʿah Muṣṭafā Muhammad), vol. 2, p. 27; *Usd al-Ghābah* (Beirut: Dār Ihyāʾ al-Turāth al-Arabi), vol. 2, p. 283.
12. Ḥalabī, in his *Insān al-ʿUlyūn fī Sīrat al-Amin al-Maʾmūn*, known as *al-Sīrah al-Ḥalabī* (Egypt: Maṭbaʿh Muhammad Ali Ṣabīʿ, 1351–3 AH), vol. 3, p. 220; and Ibn Kathīr in his *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah fī Tārīkh*, known as *Tārīkh* (Egypt: Maṭbaʿt al-Saʿāda, 1351 AH), vol. 7, p. 115, have written: "According to the hadith of Shaʿbī, the main enmity between Omar and Khālīd was that Khālīd was one of the cousins of Omar, and in their youth they often used to wrestle, and once Omar broke his ankle in wrestling. They treated it and at last it got better."

Ḥalabī continues:

Later on when Omar became the caliph, the first thing to do was to depose Khālid, so he told him that he would not get any posts or positions in Omar's government. It was why Omar wrote a letter to Abu Ubaydah Jarrāh in Syria telling him that if Khālid gives ten thousand *dirhams* as bribes to Ash'ath Ibn Qays, and he does not reject it, then let him stay in his position; but if he does reject it, then depose him from his job. Take his turban from his head, divide his property in two equal shares and take one share for you. However, Khālid was telling him: "I will do whatever you command, O the Master of the Faithful."

13. M. Bāqir Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār* (1302, Kompānī), vol. 8, pp. 264–68, under the title of "Abu Bakr"; he criticized Islam and incited violators by reading the news from their books.
14. Muhammad Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, *Tārikh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, known as *Tārikh Ṭabarī* (Cairo: Maṭba'a Istiqāmat, 1357 AH), vol. 2, pp. 502–4.
15. Muhammad Ibn Nu'mān Baghdadi (Shaykh al-Mufid), *Irshād fi Ma'rifat Hujajallah ala al-'Ibād* (lithograph, 1285 AH), pp 173–74.
16. Ibid. p. 174.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib* (Qum: Intishārāt 'Allāmah), vol. 1, pp. 421 and 426; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 584–85.
19. *Irshād*, p. 174; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 426; this hadith has been mentioned.
20. *Irshād*, pp. 174–75.
21. In Sa'īd al-Khūrī al-Shartūtī, *Aqrab al-Mawārid fi Faṣḥ al-Arabiyya wa al-Shawārid* (Beirut: Maṭba'ah Mursalī al-Yaswa'iyya, 1889), it has been explained that this word is in the category of *wadhana*, *tawadhdhana*.
22. In Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd's *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* (Dār Iḥyā al-Kutub al-Arabiyya), ed. Muhammad Abu al-Faḍl Ibrahim, vol. 2, p. 267, that he says:

In *Musnad* by Ahmad Ḥanbal (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir al-Maktabiyya al-Islamiyya), it is narrated from Masrūq, saying:

‘Āyisha told me: "You are my son, and actually are the best son in my opinion; now let me know if you have any news from Mukhdaj." I said: "Yes, I know. Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib killed him by a river called Tāmarrā, and the lower part of the river is Nahrawān, between Lakhāqīn and Ṭarfā'." ‘Āyisha said: "Do bring me a witness for this saying of yours." So I took some men who knew the case as witnesses to her.

Masrūq continues:

I told 'Āyisha: "Out of respect for this grave, tell me what you have heard about them from the Prophet of God." 'Āyisha said: "I heard that the Prophet said: 'Certainly they are the worst creatures, and the best people in God's sight will kill them; these people are the closest ones to God.'"

23. *Irshād*, p. 175; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 577, and the literary printing of Ḥayḍari, vol. 41, p. 283, as well as Mas'ūdī in *Murūj al-Dhiḥab*, vol. 2, p. 217.
24. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 592.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibn Athīr Jazarī, *Nihāyah fi Gharīb al-Hadith wa al-Athar* (Qum: Mu'assisa Ismā'īliyya, 1367 AH), vol. 4, p. 195, says there was a small amount of rough hair growing on the nipples of Dhu al-Thudayyah's chest, like the hair that grows on the paws of a dog. However, Zamakhsharī has translated it as: "It was like rough hair growing on a dog or cat's nostrils, as the hair a cobbler stitches shoes with called *kulba*."
27. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 592.
28. The sentence in parentheses is written in the margin of *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 41, p. 341.
29. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 592; all these six recent hadiths that Majlisī has narrated are in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (Dār al-Ihyā al-Kutub al-Arabiyyah), ed. Muhammad Abu al-Faḍl Ibrahim, vol. 2, pp. 275 and 277; in this recent hadith by Majlisī in *Sharḥ al-Nahj al-Balāghah*, after saying that Ali's face had changed, he writes said: "Ali kept saying: 'By God, no one has ever lied to me, nor have I lied to anyone.' At the same moment I heard a bell ringing and I felt somebody drawing water from the well, and the Imam told me: 'Quick! Investigate that well.' I did what he commanded and noticed that a corpse was on the surface of the water! I seized one of the legs and..."
30. *Irshād*, pp. 175–76; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 577–78 from *Irshād* of Mufīd; Sayyid Sharaf al-Din Āmulī has narrated this hadith in *al-Naṣṣ wa al-Ijtihād* (Beirut: Maṭba'a Dār al-Nahj), pp. 113–14 from Ṭabarānī, under the title of Jundub Ibn Zahr Ibn Ḥārith.
31. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 426; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 585.
32. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 59; *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 9, p. 592: Madā'inī has mentioned in the book *Khawārij* that as Ali set out to fight the tribe of Khawārij, one of his companions, who was

- in the first line, came to him saying: "The Nahrawān have crossed the river." Imam Ali made him swear three times, and he did, and each time he said he was sure of what he was saying. Then Imam Ali said: "By God, they have not crossed the river, nor will they cross it, for their place of death is on this side of the river." In the meantime, some horsemen reached them and hurriedly informed him that the Nahrawān had crossed the river. However, the Imam did not turn a hair until some time later it became clear that they had made a mistake.
33. *Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, ed. Muḥammad Abu al-Faḍl Ibrahīm, vol. 5, pp. 3–4; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 594.
 34. The book of Qāmūs says Mawzan is the name of a certain place. And it is said in *Muʿajam al-Buldān*: "It must actually be pronounced as Mawzin, with the final vowel as an 'i,' but not an 'a,' sound, and it is a town in Jazīrah where the tribe of Mawzar live."
 35. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 422.
 36. Up to here, it is narrated from the sermon of Sharīf Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs concerning "seditions," p. 16, from Abu Hārūn Kūfī, from ʿAmr Ibn Qays Hilālī, from *Minhāl*, quoting Ibn ʿAmr, quoting Zarr Ibn Ḥabish that Imam Ali said so.
 37. In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 91, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbdūh, vol. 1, pp. 182–84; in an edition of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, instead of the clause *liyajziya alayh* he has written *liyajtariya alayhā*. This is the first sermon that Ibrahīm Ibn Muḥammad Thaqafī has written completely, with extra phrases in his book *Ghārāt* from p. 1–13. Ibrahīm has narrated this sermon with two different chains from Zarrīn Ḥabish; Majlisī in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 8, pp. 605–6, on the argument with and murdering of the Khawārij, has narrated it from *Ghārāt*.
 38. The Imam means that: "We, the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Household of the Prophet) will be free from this sedition; that is, we will not be involved, and our religion will remain secured." Here the sentence that the Imam is using is a statement to say that his aim is to save the religion; for this reason he, along with his Household, went through a world of torture and suffering, and became banned from receiving his right. There was so much hardship for him that the historians cannot write it! Was it not the Banī Umayyad who murdered Imam Husayn and his children, and then looted all his belongings! Was it not he who killed Hasan Muṭtabā and Zayd Ibn Ali Ibn al-Husayn and Yaḥyā Ibn Zayd and many others!?

39. In *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 286, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd quotes from Ibn Hilāl Thaqafī, in the book *al-Ghārāt*, from Zakariyyā Ibn Yahyā ‘Aṭṭār, from Fāḍil, quoting Muhammad Ibn Ali as saying:

When Imam Ali said: "Do ask me your questions, for I have answers to them; by God, if you do, I have a hundred answers to give you," a man stood up, saying: "So if it is what you say, do tell how many single hairs there are on my head and in my beard?" Ali said: "By God, the Prophet had already informed me that there is an angel for every single hair on your head, and all of them together curse you! And there is a Satan for every single hair on your beard, and all of them constantly seduce and mislead you. And let me tell you, there is a child in your house who is going to kill the son of the Prophet!" At that time when His Excellency stated it, his son, later on the murderer of the son of the Prophet, was only a little baby who was crawling around at home! He was the same Sanān Ibn Anas Nakhaṭī. Shaykh Mufīd has narrated this hadith, with the same chain in *Irshād*, pp. 181–83. He has only added this part: "If you had a reasonable proof, I would let you know how many single hairs there are on your head and in your beard, but it is right and sufficient to inform you of the murderer who is a child in your home!" The name of the murderer is not mentioned in his hadith.

40. The term *khabb* means cunning, and *ḍab* means jealous and grudging; in conversation you happen to hear some say: "a man is *khabb* and *ḍab*," meaning he is a rogue, and that he takes things away from people through cunning and afflicts them.
41. In two copies of *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd in a four-volumes series, and the twenty-seven volumes printed in Egypt, the word *wajj* is printed with the letter "w" and a double "j." Apparently this is wrong, because the correct word should be *fakhkh*, with the "f" and double "kh"; Ḥājī Mīrzā Ḥabīb al-Allah Ḥāshimī in explanation of this part of *Nahj al-Balāghah* has narrated in volume 7, page 83, of the sermon; he has narrated from Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd that the correct word is *fakhkh*. *Fakhkh* is a place between Mecca and Tanīm, a kilometer to Mecca, where the event of Husayn Ibn Ali took place. In the year 169 AH, that is, 108 years after the event of Karbalā, this was the place of the martyrdom of Husayn Ibn Ali Ibn Hasan Ibn Hasan Ibn Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, the great-great grandson of Hasan from the offspring of Hasan Muṭabā. And this martyrdom of Husayn Ibn Ali is also called *shahīd Karbalā*, just as the martyrdom of Husayn Ibn Ali in 61 AH. Concerning the martyrs of *Fakhkh*, who

were three hundred altogether, according to what is narrated, all are praised, because they followed Husayn Ibn Ali and were martyred in the path of God; he only came to stand against aggression, because at his time, one of the grandchildren of Omar Ibn Khaṭṭāb, who was governing Medina, was too strict with the 'Alawīs. He ordered that every individual 'Alawī must introduce himself at least once a day, and if they did not introduce themselves to him he would surely kill them. In such conditions, the 'Alawīs were in a state of hardship, so they could do nothing but leave Medina. They had nowhere to go but toward Mecca. And their leaving Medina and going to Mecca was with the permission of Mūsā Ibn Ja'far, and the brother of Abdullah Ibn Ja'far was also among those people going to Mecca. However, all of a sudden, the army of Mūsā Hādī Abbāsī confronted them, and started fighting them and killing all of them.

They have been highly praised in the hadiths from the Imams. Among those hadiths is the very statement of Imam Ali: "On the earth, they are the only men who have been chosen, or who have been carefully chosen."

However, there is no synonym for the word *wajj*. That is because, as Yāqūt has mentioned in *Mu'ajam al-Buldān*, Wajj is a name for Ṭā'if, and in the hadith of the Prophet, it has been said: "This word used to be a town belonging to Ṭā'if; that is, it was the final place that the fighters of Islam were in the Battle of Ṭā'if, and the Battle of Ṭā'if was the last battle of the Prophet.

42. They were of the commander of Egypt and the chiefs of Ismā'iliyya.
43. Būya's three sons were 'Imād al-Dawlah Ali Ibn Būya, Rukn al-Dawlah Hasan Ibn Būya, and Mu'izz al-Dawlah Ahmad al-Būya.
44. Zāb is a district where Marwān Ḥimār took refuge from the attack of the army of Banī Abbās. The story of his escaping from his home to Zāb and other places is well explained by Ibn Athir Jazarī in *al-Kamil fi al-Tārikh* (Beirut: Dār al-Šādir, 1385AH), vol. 5, pp. 417-29.
45. This sentence:

مَلُومِينَ أَعْمَانُفُوا

up to the end of verses 61 and 62 is from the Qur'an, *Sūrat al-Aḥzāb*.

46. Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has written about this sentence:

Permitting Talḥa and Zubayr as well as ʿĀyisha to enter Heaven is not acceptable in Shiʿism. They believed in the Prophet and have taken part in *jihāds*; now, if they disobey and break their covenants, while knowing the position and attitude of Imam Ali, should they not be punished for taking twelve thousand Muslims to Basra and sending them to death? Is this action of theirs not wrong? Do they not deserve punishment? Is not fighting against the successor of the Prophet like fighting with the Prophet? It is mentioned in the Qurʾan (*āl Imrān*, verse 182 and *Anfāl*, 51):

ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

this [chastisement] is just for what your hands have sent ahead; [otherwise,] God is not, in the least, unjust to His servants. If, as the army chief sets out from the house of the Prophet, ʿĀyisha rides on a camel from Medina and Mecca to Basra, and causes twelve thousand Muslim men die, then does she deserve to be in Heaven?! The very ʿĀyisha who never repented from her evil action, and who suffered up to the end of her life over why Ali got the government, and who enjoyed hearing of Ali's martyrdom, and the same ʿĀyisha who was pleased when she heard of the death of the Prophet's daughter, and who, according to the historians, did not take part in the ceremonial session of Zahra!

—See *Tafsir al-Mizān*, vol. 5, pp. 104–16.

47. Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (Beirut: Dār al-Mʿara-fat), vol. 2, pp. 174–79; Egypt edition, vol. 7, pp. 44–60.
48. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 592 and 594
49. Mirzā Ḥabibullah Ḥāshimī Khuṭī, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (lithograph), vol. 7, pp. 69–96.
50. *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* of Khuṭī, vol. 7, p. 92.
51. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 59, pp. 107–8.
52. As we discussed in previous volumes, Abdullah Mamqānī in *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl* (lithograph, 1349–52 AH), vol. 2, p. 256, stated that ʿIkrama was the servant of Ibn Abbās with a tendency to the Khawārij; for more on biography of ʿIkrama, see M. Bāqir Mūsawī Khānsārī, *Rawdāt al-Jannāt fi Aḥwāl al-ʿUlamā wa al-Sādāt* (lithograph, 1307 AH), p. 593.
53. *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, vol. 1, pp. 446 and 447.
54. Thus Marwān Ibn Ḥakam was freed by the Imam. Based on this fact, not only Banī Umayyad, who was the son of Abu Sufyān, was freed by the Imam, but also Banī Marwān. They were freed by the Prophet and his successor.

55. In the annotation of Muhammad 'Abduh it says: "It has been written in a book before the death of Othman."
56. Sermon 71, from *Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, pp. 123–24; 'Abduh has written this phrase as *la-qadara bi-sabtihi*, in the gloss as: *sabt* as *ast*. However, in the recording of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, which is in the annotation of Muhammad Abu al-Faḍl Ibrahim, it has been recorded as *bi-subbatī*; it is clear that this is its meaning. In either one, the meaning is the same. As a man insists on hiding his forbidden part, the Imam has also concealed it for good reason, so as not to be humiliated when he was swearing allegiance.
57. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 6, pp. 146–48.
58. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 594.
59. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 100, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, pp. 194–95.
60. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, vol. 7, pp. 99–100.
61. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 595.
62. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 127, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, pp. 244–45; Ibn Shahr Āshūb has explained its first part in *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 429.
63. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 590–91.
64. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 8, pp. 125–214.
65. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 8, pp. 126–29.
66. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 8, p. 129.
67. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 8, pp. 149–50.
68. In *Siyar A'lam al-Nubalā*, known simply as *A'lam*, 28 volumes (Beirut: 1389 AH), vol. 5, pp. 140–41, Zarkilī has narrated in his biography that *Ṣāhib Zanj* was killed in 270 AH. Ali Ibn Muhammad Warzanīnī, who was known as *Ṣāhib Zanj*, was a ringleader in sedition at the time of the Abbasid. His seditions are known as the seditions of *Ṣāhib Zanj*. It is because most of his friends and companions were the Negroes. He was born in a small village, a hamlet close to Warzanīnī, and was brought up there. He rose up during the reign of the Abbasid in 255, and his belief and tendency was of Azāriqah. The Negroes and the shepherds gathered around him. He made his own army and soon after attacked Basra and captured Ablaha as well. He continued fighting and sending more of the army there until he took the land under his control. Then he settled in Baṭā'ih, and then captured Ahvaz and looted Wāsīt. His army included eight thousand brave fighters, and he chose to live in the Palace of Mukhtārih. The caliphs of the Abbasid got tired of fighting him, but later al-Muwaffaq bi Allah attained victory over him, killed

him, and then sent his head to Baghdad. Marzbān says: "There are a great many elegies concerning his bravery and boldness that are all composed by him but that he said were composed by other poets. There are different opinions as to whether he was related to 'Alawī or not." Ibn Khaldūn in his *Tārīkh* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1413 AH), vol. 4, p. 18 says that his name was Ali Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥīm, and then he continues: "He is from the tribe of Banī 'Abd al-Qays, and he is from Durfīn, a small village near Ray. He travelled to Bahrain in 249 and there, he claimed to belong to the 'Alawī. Then many people adhered to him but later on left him on his own; so he left there for Basra, and he carried out what he wanted to." Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh has written in the annotations of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 196: "*Shāhib Zanj*, Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥīm, was from the tribe of Banī Qays and he claimed to be of the 'Alawī."

69. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 8, pp. 130-49.
70. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 8, pp. 149-50. Zarkalī in *A'lam*, vol. 5, pp. 140-41.
71. Sermon 126 from *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, p. 245; Ibn Shahr Āshūb in *al-Manāqib* has mentioned the first part of it in vol. 1, p. 429.
72. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 591.
73. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 8, pp. 215-43.
74. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 8, pp. 217-18.
75. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 590.
76. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 100; *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, pp. 196-97.
77. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 7, p. 104.
78. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, part of sermon 103, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, p. 201.
79. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 7, p. 121.
80. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, taken from sermon 114, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, p. 230.
81. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 429.
82. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 592; lithograph edition, vol. 41, p. 341; *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 289.
83. Ali Ibn Mūsā al-Ṭawūs, *al-Luhūf fi Qatlay al-Ṭufuf* (lithograph), p. 88; Shaykh Abbās Qumi, *Nafas al-Mahmūm* (Ṭab' Islamiyya, 1368 AH) p. 150; Khārazmī, *Maqtal al-Husayn* (Najaf: Maṭba'at al-Zahrā, 1367 AH), p. 7; Ibn Sha'ba Ṭarfī, *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl an 'Al al-Rasūl* (Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣaḡūd, 1376 HS), p. 242; Ahmad Ibn Ali Ṭabarsī, *Ihtijāj* (Najaf: Maṭba'at Nu'mān), vol. 2, p. 25.

84. We have already mentioned some of Ḥajjāj's biography in vol. 10 of *Knowing the Imams*, in lessons 136–41.
85. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 425–26; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 585.
86. For more on Sayyid Bāb Shirazi, see Tunkābunī, *Qīṣaṣ al-ʿUlamā* (lithograph), p. 52.
87. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 418–19. He has narrated the second hadith from *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 583, from *al-Manāqib* and from the book *Kharāyij wa Jarāyih*.
88. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 419; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 583, from *Muḥāḍirāt*.
89. It is given in Qāmūs that Khawmaq is a palace that belonged to Akbar; it is drawn from the word meaning "a place for dining."
90. It is given in Qāmūs that Sudayr, pronounced *Zubayr*, is a place between Basra and Kūfa, near Ghaṭfān, and there is wide river running there.
91. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 420–21; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 578, from *Khiṣāl* of Ṣadūq where he has mentions it. It is also mentioned in *Kharāyij wa Jarāyih* of Rāwandī and *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt* and *Faḍāʾil* of Ibn Shāzān.
92. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 422.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 422–23; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 584 and 585, from *al-Manāqib*.
96. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 421; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 584, from *al-Manāqib*.
97. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 582.
98. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 423–24; Barāthā is a mosque between Kazimayn and Baghdad. It is a spiritual mosque, and there is a high reward for praying there, as narrated in hadiths.
99. Abu Bakr Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdad* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah), vol. 12, p. 305; Ismāʿīl Ibn Muhammad Ḥimyarī, *Diwān Ḥimyarī* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabat al-Ḥayāt), p. 278; Majlisī has mentioned it in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 576, from *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb.
100. *Irshād*, pp. 184–86; Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has narrated a summary of this story in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, pp. 288–89 from the book *Ṣiffīn* of Naṣr Ibn Muzāḥim from ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Sabʿa, from Ḥabīb Ibn Abi Thābit, quoting Saʿīd Taymī, known as ʿAqīsā; Majlisī in *Bihār al-Anwār*, in the section for Ibn Abi al-

Ḥadīd has mentioned the very hadith, vol. 9, p. 594; Nubātī Bayazī ʿĀmilī has mentioned it in *al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaḳīm ilā Mustahaqay al-Taqdīm* (Qum: al-Maktabat Murtaḍawiyya, 1384 AH), vol. 2, p. 37, and he has said: "This hadith has become so famous in the world that we find there is no use referring to the chains of the hadith, because all people have accepted its authenticity.

101. From the middle of the verse 29, chapter 48, *al-Faṭḥ*
102. *Irshād* of Mufīd, pp. 186–87; the elegy is from among the 113 elegies of Ḥimyarī that are published in Shaykh Abdul al-Husayn, *al-Ghadir fi al-Kitāb wa al-Sunnat wa al-Adab* (Tehran: Maṭbaʿ Ḥaydarī, 1373 AH), vol. 2, p. 214. This elegy consists of 112 lines, and because of the importance of the elegy it is called *Mudhhabah*; see Ḥimyarī's *Divān*, pp. 90–92; Sayyid Murtaḍā ʿAlam al-Hudā wrote an explanation of this elegy in 1313, and it is printed in Egypt. Moreover, Ḥāfiẓ Nassāba Ashraf Ibn al-Aghar, known as Tāj al-ʿUlā Husaynī (d. 610 AH), has mentioned it; and Sayyid Muḥsin Amīn Āmulī has mentioned it in the margins of his book *Aʿyān al-Shiʿa* (Beirut: Dār al-Taʿāruf, 1378 AH), vol. 2, pp. 222–36. The elegy ends with: "He writes and rubs out whatever he wants, for the main knowledge of the Book and whatever he writes are at his disposal."
103. *Divān Ḥimyarī*, pp. 92–93.
104. *Irshād*, p. 187.
105. Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī Shāfiʿī has mentioned it in his book *al-Iṣṣabah*, vol. 1, p. 409, the translation of Khālīd Ibn ʿUrfuṭa. ʿAmr Ibn Shibbah in *ʿAkhbār Mecca* says:

Khālīd Ibn ʿUrfuṭa came to Mecca at an early age. Saʿd Ibn Abi Waqqās appointed him as the killing authority. Khālīd was with Saʿd Ibn Abi Waqqās in the battle of Iraq, and Omar wrote a letter to Saʿd and commanded him to appoint Khālīd the chief of the army and Saʿd appointed him as the government of Kūfa. As the people paid homage to Muʿāwiyah and he came to Kūfa, Abdullah Ibn Abi al-Husāʾ rose against Muʿāwiyah in Nakhmah, and the very same Khālīd Ibn ʿUrfuṭa set out to fight along with him. Khālīd fought with him and finally killed him. Khālīd was alive from 60–61 AH, and Shaykh Mufīd had explained his story in *al-Manāqib al-ʿAlī*, through Thumālī, quoting Abu Ishāq and Suwayd Ibn Ghafḥa, saying that a man went to Imam ʿAlī and said: "I have come from the territory of Wādī al-Qurā and there I heard that Khālīd Ibn ʿUrfuṭa had died; now you ask the Almighty to bless him." ʿAlī said: "No, he has not died, he has not died."

Then Ibn Hajar narrated the full story of Khālīd Ibn ‘Urfuṭa and Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār, which we have also mentioned in *Irshād* of Shaykh Mufīd.

106. No matter how hard we tried, but we could not find the name Ḥabīb Ibn Jamār in historical and hadith sources. However, in *al-Iṣṣabah*, vol. 1, p. 305, we came across a name, Ḥabīb Ibn Ḥammād Asadī, and it is said that he was one of the companions of the Prophet, and used to travel with Imam Ali when he was on a journey; he narrated some hadiths from the Prophet. According to the author of *al-Iṣṣabah*, under the explanation of the life of Khālīd Ibn ‘Urfuṭa, it becomes quite clear that he was the banner-bearer in the army of Ḥabīb Ibn Ḥammād.
107. *Irshād* of Mufīd, p. 182.
108. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 427.
109. See *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 585; Sayyid Ibn Tāwūs in *Malāḥim wa Fitān* (Najaf: Ḥaydariyya), 92.
110. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 578–79; in *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, pp. 286–87, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has mentioned this hadith from Ibn Hilāl Thaqaḥī in the book of *Ghārāt* from Hasan Ibn Maḥbūb, quoting Thābit Thumālī, from Suwayd Ibn Ghafḥa.
111. *Irshād*, p. 183; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 427; it has been narrated in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 585 from *al-Manāqib*.
112. In *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl*, in the section of the translation of Juwayriya, it has been recorded as Mus-hir, not Mus-har as is common.
113. *Irshād*, p. 183; in *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb, vol. 1, p. 428, some of this hadith has been explained; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 586, similarly mentions it on p. 578.
114. This hadith has been narrated by Majlisī in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 582 from *Kharāyij wa Jarāyih*; It is also in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 593, and in vol. 41, pp. 342–43 of *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd narrates the story of Juwayriya as follows:

Ibrahim Ibn Maymūn Azdī has narrated from Ḥabbah ‘Urānī saying: “Juwayriya Ibn Mus-hir ‘Abdī was a just man, and he was the friend of Imam Ali. His Excellency liked him very much. One day when Imam Ali was walking on the road, he came across Juwayriya and told him: ‘O Juwariyah, come closer to me, because whenever I see you, I enjoy having a friendly conversation with you.’”

Ismā‘īl Ibn Abān has narrated from Ṣabāh and Muslim, who have quoted Ḥabbah ‘Urānī as saying:

Once we were walking with Imam Ali when the Imam turned back and saw Juwayriya was following us. The Imam called him: "O Juwayriya, come closer to us; do you not know that I really love you?" Juwayriya hastened to immediately join the Imam, and Ali told him: "O Juwayriya, I have something to tell you; listen well and try to keep it in your mind." Then the two separated from us and walked farther away, speaking slowly between them. I lent an ear and heard Juwayriya say: "O Master of the Faithful, I am a forgetful person." The Imam said: "But I am going to repeat my words to you so that you may memorize them." The Imam was speaking to him secretly, but the only thing we heard was that the Imam said:

ما جريد، أحب حبيتنا ما أحبنا فأنا ابننا فأبغضه وأبغض بيضنا ما أبغضنا فأبغضنا
أحبنا فأحببه

"O Juwayriya, do like our friend as long as he likes us, but if he hates us and considers us as his enemy, you too take him as an enemy. In any case, whoever considers us as his enemy, you too take him as the enemy, but him who is loyal to us, you also be friend to him." On account of Juwayriya's excessive friendship with Imam Ali, some people who hated Ali thought that he was going to appoint Juwayriya as his successor after him.

It is also narrated that one day Ali was sleeping and some of his companions were sitting and chatting together. Then Juwayriya turned to Ali and called: "O you who are sleeping, wake up."—*Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, pp. 290–92.

115. Majlisī in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 585 and (literary printing), vol. 41, p. 314. He has narrated this hadith from *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb.
116. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 427; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 585, and vol. 1, p. 314 from *al-Manāqib*.
117. Ibid.
118. Ibid.
119. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 592.
120. All that we explained here from *Biḥār al-Anwār* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, we borrowed from the book of Naṣr Ibn Muzāḥim, *Ṣifḥīn* (Cairo) with the explanation of ‘Abd al-Salām Muhammad Hārūn; see for example pages 141–42. And it is from *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 3, pp. 161–71.

121. Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs has narrated in *Malāḥim wa Fitan*, pp. 92–93, from the book *Fitan* by Salīlī with his own chains from ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Sā’ib from Maymūn, from Shaybān. He has narrated that he said:

We were returning with Ali from Ṣiffin, and on the way, we stayed in Karbalā. Ali was mounting his mule. Then he dismounted and took some soil from under the feet of the mule. He smelt it, gave kisses to it, and they laid it on his eyes, while crying, and said:

وَإِنِّي حَبِيبٌ يَقْتُلُ فِي هَذَا الْمَوْضِعِ، كَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَى نَقْلِ مَنْ أَلَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَدَانَا عَوَابَهُنَا
الْوَادِي، فَخَرَجْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَتَلْتَمِصُوهُمْ، وَيَلُّ لَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ، وَيَلُّ لَكُمْ مِنْكُمْ، مَا أَعْلَمُ شُهَدَاءَ
أَفْضَلَ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا شُهَدَاءَ خَلْقِهِمْ مَعَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَيُّونِي
بِرَجُلٍ حَارٍ أَوْ فُلٍّ حَارٍ.

After the foregoing praise, he said: "Now, bring a leg of a donkey or its jaw."

Shaybān says: "I prepared a leg of a donkey for him. He struck it on the ground close to the leg of his mule. Later on [after the incident of Karbala], when Husayn was martyred, I went there and took that piece of the donkey-leg out of the blood. Then when I looked around I saw that all his companions were martyred and their corpses were scattered around."

122. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 591–92. This hadith has been addressed in detail in the book *Ṣiffin* of ‘Abd al-Salām Muhammad Hārūn, pp. 140–41.
123. *al-Ghadir*, vol. 4, p. 386.
124. *Ibid.*
125. Muḥsin Fayḍ Kashani, *Tafsir al-Ṣāfi* (n.p., Ṭab‘ Islamiyya, 1384 AH), p. 569.
126. *al-Mizān fi Tafsir al-Qur‘an*, vol. 20, pp. 460–61.
127. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 190, fifth section of the sermon, ed. M. ‘Abduh, vol. 1, pp. 292–93.
128. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 13, p. 200.
129. *Ibid.*
130. *Ibid.*
131. *Ibid.*
132. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 13, p. 207.

133. *Irshād*, p. 177; Majlisī has narrated it in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 582 from *Kharāyij* by Rāwandī.
134. *Irshād*, pp. 177–78.
135. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib* vol. 1, p. 426.
136. Here, Ḥujr's cursing is equivocal and has a double meaning, because the phrase "Do curse him" refers to their Amir but not to the Imam.
137. *Irshād*, p. 178.
138. *Ibid.* p. 178.
139. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 426–27.
140. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 428–29; Majlisī in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 586 from *al-Manāqib*.
141. It is mentioned in Shihāb al-Dīn Abi Abillāh Yāqūt Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān* (Egypt: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿāda, 1324 AH) that "Adhrā" is a famous village at Ghūṭa in Damascus, in the county of Khulān. There a minaret and Ḥujr ʿAdī Kindī was killed there and his grave remains there. It is said that Ḥujr had captured that place. Ghūṭa is a place in Sham with plentiful rain and water and fresh tall trees. Firūz Ābādī says: "'Adhrā' is a place in Sham some seven kilometers away from Damascus."
142. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 428–29; Majlisī in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 586 from *al-Manāqib*.
143. Abu Omar Abdul al-Birr, *Istīʿab* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Nihḍat, 1380 AH), vol. 1, pp. 329–32, series no. 487. Ḥujr Ibn ʿAdī Ibn Rabīʿ Ibn Muʿāwiyah al-Akramīn, together with brother, Hānī Ibn ʿAdī, went into the presence of the Prophet. Then he took part in the Battle of Qādisiyya, and he conquered Marj ʿAdhrā and he died there. He was of the sincere companions of Imam Ali. Ibn Saʿd has explained his story in detail in *Ṭabaqāt* (Beirut) vol. 6, pp. 217–20; Ibn Athīr Jazāʾirī has also explained his biography in *Uṣd al-Ghābah*, vol. 1, pp. 385–86; Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī has written his life story in detail in *al-Iṣābah*, pp. 313–14, no. 1629.
144. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 429.
145. *Ibid.*; Majlisī has narrated this in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 419 from *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* of Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd; Ibn Abi Ḥadīd, vol. 4, pp. 54–128 has explained this sermon with historical details from the time that Imam Ali was cursed by Muʿāwiyah up to the time of Omar Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. He has introduced all those people who used to curse Ali.
146. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 429.

147. *al-Nihāyah fi Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar*, vol. 2, p. 213, the section for the Arabic letters *b* to *r*, the word *radah*.
148. *al-Nihāyah fi Gharib al-Hadith*, vol. 4, p. 304, the section for Arabic letters *m* to *h*, the word *maḥal*.
149. *al-Nihāyah fi Gharib al-Hadith*, vol. 1, p. 151, the section for Arabic letters *b* to *m*, the word *balah*.
150. This statement of the Imam is like another statement of his that Nuʿmānī in his book *al-Ghaybat* says that Imam Ṣādiq has narrated—that Imam Ali said on the pulpit of Kūfa Mosque: “Certainly against you there will arise serious disasters and afflictions. They are hidden behind clouds, and it is difficult to understand where they are from. Only those who are not known to the people will make out what is what. They know the people, but the people cannot recognize them.” Nuʿmānī, *al-Ghaybat* (Maktabah Ṣadūq), p. 141; Ibn Athīr has recorded in *al-Nihāyah fi Gharib al-Hadith*, vol. 5, p. 131:

When Imam Ali mentioned the event and seditions of the Last Days, he added: “That means an unreliable person whom no one trusts. It is said that such a person is one who is among the people and does not distinguish good from evil. On another occasion it has been said that the meaning of the Arabic word *nawmah* is one who sleeps too much, but when the same word is spelt *nurwamah*, it means an unreliable person.

151. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 431. The verse mentioned in the final part is verse 10 from the chapter *Hajj*.
152. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 587–88. In the original copy, Majlisī has used this term:

يُشرد الملك منه شرودا لئيفق

and has explained: “Fīrūz Ābādī has said: ‘the term *nīqniq* means disobedience and oppression.’”

153. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 431; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 588.
154. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 588; *al-Nihāyah* of Ibn Athīr Jazāʾirī, vol. 4, p. 113.
155. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 588.
156. Ibid.
157. The Arabic word *ashrāk* is the plural of *sharak*.
158. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 9, p. 587; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 587.
159. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 587.

160. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 431; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 588. In the explanation of this sermon, he says that that Fīrūz Ābādī has said: "Najd al-Jāḥ is a place in Yemen, and Ruḏat al-Khākh is between Mecca and Medina." He says: "Ṣaghāniyān is a big area by the Māwarā' al-Nahr."
161. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, in *Ma'ālim al-'Ulamā* (Najaf: Maṭba'ah Ḥaydarī, 1380), p. 63, under no. 466, says:

Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Khazzāz Rāzī, who is known as al-Qumi and has some books on jurisprudence and theology such as *al-Aḥkām al-Shar'īyah alā Madhhab al-Imāmiyyah*, *al-Iqdāl fi al-I'tiqād*, *al-Kifāyah fi al-Nuṣūṣ*; and 'Allāmah Āghā Buzurg-i Tehrani in *al-Dharī'ah* (Najaf: Maṭba'ah al-Gharā, 1369 AH), vol. 18, pp. 86 and 87, under no. 806, have said:

There is a secret that Shaykh al-Aqdam Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ali Khazzāz is known and Shaykh al-Qumi. He has narrated from Shaykh Ṣadūq and from Abu Mufaḍḍal Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Shaybāni, and from Qādī Abu al-Faraj Mu'āfān Ibn Zakariyyā and from Abu Abdullah Husayn Ibn Sa'īd Khuzā'i and from Ali Ibn Husayn Ibn Ali Ibn Mundah, and from Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Ayyāsh Jawharī, the author of *Muqtaḍib al-Athar*. Ibn Shahr Āshūb has explained about this book in *Ma'ālim*; Mullā Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī also has explained this book in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, and he suspected that this book belongs either to Ṣadūq or Mufīd.

162. *Kifāyat al-Athar fi al-Nuṣūṣ alal A'immat al-Ithnā al-'Ashar* is in a collection with *Arba'in* of Majlisī, and with *Kharāyij wa Jarāyih* of Rāwandī has been bound in one volume, pp. 315–16. Certainly this hadith continues, and we have used just a part of it, the prediction of the Imam about the kingdom of Banī Abbās, which we needed here. And *al-Manāqib* has also narrated this much in vol. 1, p. 429, and it is narrated in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 589.
163. It is said in the lexicon of *Sharh al-Qāmūs*: "*Rukhām* is a kind of weak and white stone with crimson blood-vessels."
164. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 590.
165. *Kifāyat al-Athar*, p. 316.
166. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 430.
167. In another copy, Mudharra' is said to be Muzarra'.
168. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 428.
169. *Irshād*, pp. 180–81; *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, vol. 2, pp. 294–95.

170. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 428.
171. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 594, and (lithograph), vol. 41, pp. 346–47; *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, vol. 2, pp. 294–95.
172. Sermon 37 from *Nahj al-Balāghah*.
173. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, pp. 289–90; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 592–93; and (lithograph), vol. 41, page 342 of *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* from Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd.
174. *Irshād*, p. 181.
175. *Irshād*, pp. 181–82.
176. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 295.
177. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 294; Shaykh Mufid has narrated the very hadith in *Irshād*, p. 180. At the end of his narration, he has said: “Both the pro and con narrators have mentioned this event, and the case is clear to everyone; Majlisī has also narrated it in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 594 from *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah* by Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd.
178. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, pp. 291–94; Majlisī has narrated this whole hadith in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 593–94 from *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, and from the *Ghārāt* of Ibrahim Thaqafī. Moreover, Shaykh Mufid has explained it in *Irshād*, pp. 178–80. And following it, he says: “This sentence is of the unseen knowledge of Imam Ali remaining so far and kept safe by the scholars; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī has mentioned it in the book of *al-Iṣābah*, vol. 3, p. 479, under the number 8474, the biography of Maytham from Mu’ayyid Ibn Nu‘mān, and he has said that Maytham used to live in Kūfa and that his lineage was of that town.”
179. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 114, ed. M. ‘Abduh, vol. 1, p. 230. We have explained other parts of this sermon in different sections of the present volume.
180. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 428.
181. *Irshād*, p. 176.
182. *Irshād*, p. 177; Ibn Shahr Āshūb has mentioned this hadith in *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 428 from Aṣbagh Ibn Nubātah with the phrase *tadūr raḥya al-shaytān*, meaning that “in this month the mill of Satan will be turned round”; Majlisī in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 648 narrates this sentence as *tadūr raḥya al-Sultān*, meaning the Imam’s rule coming to an end, or it might be news about the change of government.
183. *Irshād*, p. 177; this hadith has been narrated by *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb. The hadith says:

It is right that he used to break his fast with Abdullah, and that must be Abdullah Ibn Ja'far and not Abdullah Ibn Abbās. It seems that the best proof for our claim is that Majlisī has narrated in volume 9, p. 648, from *Khurāyij* of Rāwandī, where it says: "In the evenings he used to break his fast with Abdullah Ibn Ja'far, the husband of his daughter, Zaynab, and it was for Zaynab"; Ibn Hajar Haythamī has narrated this hadith in *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqah*, p. 80, from Umm Haytham, the daughter of Aswad Nakhaṣī.

184. *Irshād* p. 177; Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has narrated this hadith in *Tadhkirat khawāṣṣ al-Umma* (Iran: lithography, 1287 AH), p. 100, from Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, in *Musnad* from Ali Ibn Ḥakīm Awdī, from Sharik, from Othman Ibn Abi Zar'a, from Zayd Ibn Wahab that a group of people from the tribe of Khawārij went to the Imam, and there was a man among them called Ja'dat Ibn Ba'ja. After explaining the statement of the Imam, he says: "Ja'dat Ibn Ba'ja objected to the Imam's wearing rough clothes and reproached him." The Imam stated: "These clothes of mine free me from pride, and this behavior [wearing these kinds of clothes] deserves to be followed by Muslims."
185. *Irshād*, p. 177; *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 80.
186. *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb, vol. 1, p. 428.
187. Ibn Hajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqah* (Egypt: Dār al-Ṭibā'at al-Muhamadiyya, 1375 AH), pp. 79–80.
188. See *Tārīkh A'tham Kūfī*, pp. 313–15. A'tham Kūfī wrote this history in Arabic in 204 AH, and then, in the year 596 AH, Khājiḥ Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Mustufī translated it into Persian by request of the governor of Khārazm and of Khurasan, Mu'ayyid Qawām al-Dīn.
189. *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 4, pp. 34–35; this hadith has been explained in *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqah*, p. 74; the beginning of this hadith has been mentioned by Ibn Sa'd in *Tabaqāt* (Egypt: Dār Ṣārimī, 1376 AH) vol. 3, p. 35; moreover, Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has narrated this hadith in *Tadhkirat Khawāṣṣ al-Umma*, pp. 99–100, from Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, in the section of *Faḍā'il*, from Wakī', from Qutaybat Ibn Qudāmat Rawāsī, from his father, from Ḍaḥḥāk Ibn Muzāhim, from Imam Ali; finally in the book of *al-Zuhd*, Abdullah Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal has narrated it from his father.
190. *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 4, p. 35; and Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has narrated this hadith in *Tadhkirat Khawāṣṣ al-Umma*, p. 100, from his grandfather, Abu al-Faraj, saying:

These two lines of elegy that he has referred to are from Uḥayḥa Anṣārī, and there is a third line as well that says:

الترع واليضة يوم الزوع بكفيت

"The chain mail and helmet are enough for you in fright." Then in the translation of *Tārīkh A'atham Kūfi* (lithography), p. 314, he adds to it:

كما أضحكك الدهر كذلك الدهر يبكيكـ قد أعرف أقواماً وإن كانوا صاعياً
مصارع إلى النجدة للنبي متاركا

"As the world makes you laugh, so does it make you cry. I know a group who, although they were poor and abject, were very keen to gain pride—they were careful not to go astray."

It is said in Milānī, *Majma' al-Amthāl* (Maktaba Muḥamadiyya, 1376), vol. 1, pp. 336–37: "These elegies are from Uḥayḥa Ibn Jalāḥ, who used to instigate his son, and then Imam Ali introduced him as the exemplary"; Ibn Shahr Āshūb has mentioned this elegy in *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 80.

191. *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd, vol. 3, p. 33; Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has also narrated this hadith in *Tadhkirat*, p. 101, from *Ṭabaqāt*; and Ibn Shahr Āshūb from *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 80; moreover, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has mentioned it in *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 9, p. 118, and Muhammad Abu al-Faḍl Ibrahim in his annotation has written: "This elegy is from the elegies that are recorded in *al-Lā'li*, p. 63, and he has related them to 'Amr Ibn Ma'dikrāb."
192. *al-Nihāyha* of Ibn Athīr, vol. 3, p. 197.
193. *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd, vol. 3, p. 34; Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has narrated this hadith in *Tadhkirat Khawāṣṣ*, pp. 100–1, from *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd. In the fourth hadith, instead of the phrase "to kill him," he has written: "Let us destroy him."
194. *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3, p. 35; Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has narrated this hadith in *Tadhkirah*, p. 101, from *Ṭabaqāt*; Ibn Shahr Āshūb has mentioned it in *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 81.
195. In *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 9, p. 118, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has explained in brief most of the information in this respect, and he has confirmed the correctness of the hadiths. He refers to sermon 147 in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, where Imam Ali states:

وَكَمْ أَطْرَدْتُ الْأَيَّامَ أَنْجَحْتُهَا عَنْ مَكُونِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ قَابِي اللَّهِ إِلَّا أَخْفَاتِهِ مِهْمَاتٍ عِلْمٍ مَحْزُونٍ.

"So many days I investigated to understand some events and affairs; however, God hid them from me. Pity for this

knowledge is with God, and apart from Him no one is acquainted with it!" This statement of the Imam tells us that at the time of his death, he did not possess the whole of knowledge. It was the Prophet who had informed him of the event, because it is apparent to us that the Prophet pointed to his head and beard and then informed him what would happen; he said:

أتعلم من اشق الأولين؟ قال: نعم، عاقراً ناقته قال له: أتعلم من اشق الآخرين؟ قال: لا قال: من يضرك ههنا، فغضب ههنا

"Do you know who the first wretched one is?" He answered: "Yes, I know; he is the one who hamstrunged the camel." Then he asked: "Do you know who the last wretched one is going to be?" He answered: "no." The Prophet said: "The one who is going to strike here and color it." And then, after a little explanation, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd says:

If you asked me what I would do with all the events: his statement to Ibn Muljam, and his sincere companion's statement to the Imam, and the Imam's answer to him, and how the ducks were cackling after him that night he was going to the mosque, and the night that Ibn Muljam struck him on the head, and so many items of information from the Prophet about him, such as:

إنى رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم فشكوت إليه وقلت: ما قببت من أئمتك من الأود واللد؟ قال: ادع الله عليهم قلت: اللهم أبدلني بهم غير أنهم وأبدلهم بى شراً منى؟ وإنى لا أقتل محارباً وإنما أقتل فكراً وغيلة؟ يقتلنى رجل حامل الذكرك.

I would answer to all these questions: none of these statements proves that Imam Ali had the whole of knowledge with him at the time of his passing away. Do you not see that nowhere is it written or mentioned anything about his complete knowledge about his death and the place he was going to be killed?

To all these questions, Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has given answers.

196. *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3, p. 35; the verse is 190 from the chapter of *al-Baqara*, meaning: "Be not extravagant, because God does not like extravagance"; Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has narrated this hadith in *Tadhkirat*, p. 101, from *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd; Ibn Shahr Āshūb has mentioned it in *al-Manāqib*, p. 81.
197. *Tadhkirat Khawāṣṣ al-Umma*, pp. 100-1; Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated that Imam Ali has composed the elegy. See the second

hadith in *al-Manāqib*, (lithograph), vol. 2, p. 82, which is narrated from Abu Othman Māzinī.

198. Ibid.

199. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, p. 647.

200. *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 9, pp. 646 to 648, and (lithography), vol. 42, pp. 190–99.

201. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 79.

202. ‘Allāmah Amīnī in *al-Ghadir*, vol. 6, pp. 268–69 has mentioned that Ḥāfiẓ ‘Āṣimī in *Zayn al-Fatā*, when explaining the Qur’anic chapter of *Hal-atā*, had investigated it and then said:

When Abu Bakr passed away, we gathered around his corpse to say the final prayer and then went to Omar al-Khaṭṭāb, paying homage to him. After that, we often went to the mosque, and in few days they called him the Commander of the Believers. One day, when we were present in the mosque, a Jew from Medina, who claimed to be of the lineage of Aaron, brother of Moses, entered the mosque and went straight to Omar, saying: “O Commander of the Believers, which of you is the most learned and knows the Prophet and God’s Book? I want to ask him a few questions.” Omar pointed to Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib and said: “This man is more learned and is knowledgeable in the Book of God.” The Jew turned to Ali and asked him if Omar was right. Ali told him: “Yes, do ask me whatever you want.” The Jew said: “In that case, I am going to ask you one out of three important things, and then one out of another three, and then ask my last question.” Imām Ali said: “Why in this way?” The Jew said: “Because I am going to ask you about three things; then if you give the correct answer, I will ask some more—one by one. However, if you made a mistake, I am not going to ask you any more.” (So he started his questions one after the other and received right answers to each one. Then he stopped.) Ali told him: “Go on, ask some more.” The Jew said: “Now, tell me how long the successor of the Muhammad is going to live and run the government before dying or being killed?” Ali said: “O man, He will live for 30 years after Muhammad.” Then, while pointing to his head, he said: “This [head of mine] will be dyed with my blood!” The Jew stood up and recited: “I testify that there is no god beside God, and I testify that Muhammad is the Apostle of God!”

203. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 79.

204. Ibid.

205. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, pp. 80–81; Ibn Hajar Haythamī in *al-Sawāʾiq al-Mulḥriqah*, p. 80 has explained the story of Ibn Muljam’s

falling in love with Qaṭām and his marrying Qaṭām in detail from *Mustadrak* of Saddī.

206. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 81.
207. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 82.
208. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 84.
209. *Ibid.*
210. *Ibid.*
211. *al-Ghadir*, vol. 4, the entry on Malik Ṣāliḥ from pp. 341 to 371 says that Ṭālīʿ Ibn Ruzzīk was born in 495 AH and martyred in 556 AH. His origin was from Iraq. He became a ruler at the time of Faṭīmīyyun and served the country in Egypt.
212. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 84.
213. *al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʿan*, vol. 19, pp. 216–17.
214. Sayyid Hasan Ṣadr has said in the book *al-Shiʿa wa Funūn al-Islam* (Ṣaydā: Maṭbaʿa ʿIrfān, 1331 AH), p. 49: "Before any discussion about the priority of the Shiʿism in understanding the secrets of the Qurʿan, we need to demonstrate that Imam Ali is the first person in the attainment of the knowledge of the Qurʿan, so he is a reference for everyone who is seeking the knowledge of the Qurʿan."
215. In Sayyid Hāhim Baḥrānī, *Ghāyat al-Marām* (Tehran: lithograph, 1372), second part, pp. 494–97; see our explanation of 24 hadiths from Ibn Abi Ḥadīd, in vol. 11 of *Knowing the Imams*, lessons 161–65. In these hadiths, Ibn Abi Ḥadīd mentions some of this in the preface of *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* and then says:

وقد أصف الشافعي محمد بن ادریس اذ قيل له: ما تقول في علي؟ قال: وماذا أقول في رجل

أخفت أوليائه فضائله عروفاً، وأخفت أعداؤه فضائله حسداً، وشاع من بين ذين ماملاً

الحاقدین

"And certainly in this case Shāfiʿī was just when he was asked: 'What is your opinion about Ali?' He answered: 'What can I say about a man whose friends in fear have hidden his precedence, and on the other hand, his enemies have hidden our jealousy of him? Nevertheless, despite all this, Ali's knowledge and his precedence have been known to all and have been spread everywhere.'"

216. We have discussed this hadith in vol. 11 of *Knowing the Imams*, lessons 157–60.
217. About all these cases, see our discussion in volume 11.

218. Sayyid Ḥaydar ʿĀmilī in *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār wa Manbaʿ al-Anwār* (Tehran: 1347), with an introduction by Henry Corbin and Othman Ismāʿīl Yahyā. It says on pp. 223–28:

The terms *Quṭb* and *Maʿsūm*, or *Quṭb* and Imam, are two synonyms used for the caliph of God on earth whose chain continues after Imam Jaʿfar Ṣādiq through Abu Yazīd Baṣṭāmī, who was the noble servant and confidant of his at home. Imam Jaʿfar Ṣādiq inherited the position of *wilayāh* after Imam Ali, and up to now, all his followers have remained his followers. The order of their chains is from Mūsā al-Kāzim to Shaḥīq Balkhī, and from him to his students and followers. The order of the chains from Ali Ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā to Maʿrūf Karkhī and from him to Sarrī Thaqaṣī, and from Sarrī to Junayd Baqdādī, and from Junayd to Shiblī, and such is the story up to now. Therefore all aforementioned Shaykhs have stated that the origin of their mystical knowledge goes back to Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib. Among those Shaykhs is Imam Fāḍil Kamāl al-Dīn, Haytham (Maytham-Ṣaḥḥ) Baḥrānī, because in his great annotations on *Nahj al-Balāghah*, in the section on style and grammar, he has mentioned that the origin of the whole of knowledge is Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib. Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Muṭahhar has also explained it in his books *Manāḥij al-Yaqīn*, *Minḥāj al-Karāmat*, and *Sharḥ al-Nazm*, and in some other books. This has also been done by Samarqandī and Khāwjah Nāṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī.

219. *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, pp. 17–20.
 220. *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, pp. 24–25.
 221. *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, pp. 27–28.
 222. *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 262.
 223. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 263.
 224. Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī has explained it in *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, vol. 7, pp. 318–19, under no. 540, that ʿUlī Ibn Ribāh Ibn Qaṣīr Lakhmī was one of those who had joined to Muʿāwīyah; in *Ṭabaqāt*, Ibn Saʿd has stated that he was from the tribe of Thanīyah in Egypt, and he says he was a jurist. Layth says: “ʿUlī Ibn Ribāh Ibn has said: ‘I would not forgive anyone for calling me Ali because, in Arabic, my name is ʿUlī.’”

Muqṛī says:

Whenever the Banī Umayyad found out a baby was named after Ali, they would immediately kill him. Then when this news reached Ribāh, he said: “My name is ʿUlī, not Ali,” and he would be disgusted when anyone called his son Ali. He was born in the year 10 AH and died in 114 or 117. Ibn Saʿd and Ibn Muʿīn have

said: "The Egyptian would call him Ali but the people of Iraq called him 'Uli"

225. It is recorded in *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, vol. 2, pp. 61–62, under no. 95, that Jabalat Ibn Suhaym Taymī Kūfī, Shu'bat, Thūri, Yahyā, Ibn Mu'īn, Ibn Maryam 'Ajli, Nisā'ī, and Abu Ḥātam have approved him. Ibn Sa'd says: "He died in the sedition of Walid Ibn Yazid; Khalifah Ibn Khayyāt says: 'He died in 125 AH in the land of Yūsuf Ibn Omar; Ghurāb in his *Tārīkh* says: 'He died in 126 AH.'"
226. It is recorded in a lithograph copy similar to what we have explained here. That is, it has been recorded

مع البته

so we too have translated it as "separation from the people." It is said in Ismā'īl Ibn Ḥamād Jawharī, *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Luqat* (Egypt: Maṭba'at al-ʿĀmira, 1282 AH), vol. 1, p. 31:

أب القراء: أب الأهل بالهاء والياء أبا: جمعها وساتها. وأب الجيش إذا جمعتهم وتألوا: تجمعوا. و
هم أب وأب إذا كفوا بجمعين. قال ربيعة: قد أصبح الناس علينا أبا. قال نس في جنب وكنا جنبا. و
كذلك الأكلة بالضم والتأليب: التخص، يقال: حود مؤلب قال ساعن بن جوية المنلى: ضرب
لهمم التتمير المؤلب والتألب مثال الطلب: تجمرو.

However, in *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 19, p. 14, and vol. 92, p. 52, Majlisī has recorded the expression

مع القيه

from *al-Manāqib*; the annotator of *Bihār al-Anwār* has explained in the margin that

مع القيه

is the correct expression; however, it seems that

البته

is correct.

227. In *al-Manāqib* it is written in the same way, and *Bihār al-Anwār*, which has copied *al-Manāqib*, has narrated that the main expression is

الأمر ما جاء به أبو الحسن.

However, in *Bihār*, it has been recorded that the expression is in question form, as:

الأمر ما جاء به أبو الحسن؟

and that is why we did the translation in the same way.

228. Sayyid Hasan Ṣadr in his book *al-Shi'a wa Funūn al-Islam*, page 49, says: "The first Qur'an furnished with a cover that was made after the demise of the Prophet was made by Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, and there are many hadiths and information by the all sects (Shi'a and Sunni) to prove it. We mentioned some of them under the title *T'asīs al-Shi'a li-'Ulūm al-Islam*, and on the *hadith* of Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī we have had enough discussion."
229. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 42. The correct word is

واستجمعت

Therefore, the exact meaning of the poem is: "Ali is the collector of the Revelations of God; when the Book was in separate pages he was the one who tried to bring them together when others could not."

230. It is a part of the elegy by Ṣāhib Ibn 'Abbād from his *Divān*, pp. 106–11; Sibṭ Ibn Juzī has given it in his *Tadhkirat Khawāṣṣ al-Umma*, p. 88.
231. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 266–67.
232. In the second part of *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 513, hadith 26 by the Sunnis, from Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs, in the book of Sa'd al-Sa'ud by the Sunnis from Abu Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī, it is narrated that when Ali was telling a story of Moses's period, he added: "The explanation of his book exceeded 40 camels' loads, and if God and Messenger allowed me, I would begin just from the first letter of the first chapter, *Fātiḥah*, until it reached that load, that is 40 camels' loads. There is not so much explanation about knowledge until it is connected to the divinity knowledge." And this sentence is the last utterance of Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ghazzālī in the book of the explanation of *'Ilm al-Ladunnī* (God given knowledge), in the attribution of our Master, Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib; in hadith 27 from the Sunni scholars, from Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs, from Abu Omar Zāhid, whose real name is Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid, it is narrated in his book by means of the chains related to Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib that the Imam said:

"O Ibn Abbās, when you have said the late evening prayer, do come to me in the outskirts of the town." Ibn Abbās said:

I said my late evening prayer, and when I joined the Imam it was a bright night. The Imam asked me: "What is the meaning of the first letter in the word *al-Ḥamd*?" I did not know even

one word about it to tell him. The Imam spoke about that letter for an hour, and then asked me: "Now, tell me what is the meaning of the second letter?" I answered: "I really do not know!" Again the Imam spoke for an hour about it; then he asked: "What is the meaning of the third letter?" Again I replied that I did not know. Then, the Imam spoke for an hour about the meaning of it. Next he asked to know if I knew the meaning of the letter "d," to which question I also said I did not know it. The Imam spoke a great deal about it. So at that moment he told me: "Stand up, go back to your home, and say the morning prayer."

Abu al-Abbās Abdullah Ibn Abbās says: "I stood up when I had memorized whatever he had told me. It was then, comparing my knowledge to Ali's, that I gathered that my knowledge about the Qur'an was next to nothing, as a drop in a vast ocean!"

233. Ibn 'Abd al-Birr in *Istī'ab*, vol. 3, p. 1107, from Mu'ammār and from Wahab Ibn Abdullah, from Abu Ṭufayl, has narrated that he said:

I was present when Ali was lecturing and saying:

سلوني، فوالله لا تسألوني عن شيء إلا أخبركم، وسلوني عن كتاب الله، فوالله ما من آية إلا وأنا أعلم أبليل نزلت أم نهار، أم في سهل أم في جبل.

"Do ask me, because by God, there remains nothing of the questions you ask me that I do not answer. Do ask me about the Book of God; by God, I know all the verses in the Qur'an that you are going to ask me about; I am aware of all the verses sent down in the daytime or at night, or in the deserts or on the mountains."

234. Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī has mentioned in his book *Jāmi' al-Asrār wa Manb'ā al-Anwār*, p. 690, in the explanation of Ḥaḳīqat al-Kullīyyah:

واعلم أن هذه الحقيقة (الكلمة التمتية بالعين الأولى) عند التحقيق ليس لها اسم ولا رسم ولا وصف ولا تمت لأن الحق أنى هي صورته كذلك.

"And know that this Reality (*Ḥaḳīqat*), (the universal manifestation that is individualized by the first creation) according to the scholars has no name or description, no attribute, for indeed this is the True Reality [God] of the existent." He continues up to p. 694 and then says:

This first manifestation is called "dot" [tiny and limited existence compared to the whole realm of words], because it is the first individualized existent of the existence. As an explanation, this individualized existent is illustrated by a "dot" under a *bā*

which has no independent reality [and also a *bā* without a "dot" has no meaning], and for this reason Imam Ali said: "I am a dot under the letter *bā*' [to show the importance of the first creation and the multiplicity of creatures]." He said:

If you want to load 70 camels from

[i.e. to create many individuals from that first emanated existence], I can do it in the name of God, the Merciful."

Then, Imam Ali continues: "I am like a 'dot' under *bā*', as my existence in relation to the first emanated existence, i.e. the Light of Muhammadan Reality of the Prophet, as he said: 'Ali and I are from one Light.'"

235. *al-Mizān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 18, pp. 395–96.
236. Ismā'īl Ibn Omar Kathīr Damishqī, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr), vol. 6, pp. 413–14.
237. Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* (Dār al-Ma'riha, 1404), vol. 6, p. 111.
238. *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 111; *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 6, p. 414.
239. *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 111.
240. The word *ʿarājīns* is the plural of *ʿurjūn*, and the *ʿurjūn* of a palm tree means the twigs that grow on the trunk of the tree on which dates grow. After the dates are picked, the *ʿurjūns* dry out.
241. This case has been explained in the book of *al-Naṣṣ wa al-Ijtihād*, p. 217. It is said in the annotation: "The narrators have related this event with their chains, and Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has mentioned it in vol. 3 of *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 122; and *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 6, pp. 290–92, no. 90.
242. Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, *Itqān* of Suyūṭī (Egypt: Maṭbaʿat al-Mūsawīyya, 1278 AH), vol. 2, p. 4.
243. *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 6, p. 414.
244. It is said in *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 181, that the sentence started with "he used to say..." And then Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd has added:

The correct hadith is: some women were sitting in the presence of the Prophet of God and were speaking aloud. All of a sudden Omar entered the room and they were frightened and one after another began running away. Omar called them, saying: "O you, the enemies of yourselves, are you afraid of me but not frightened of the Prophet of God?" To his remark, some of them said: "Yes, you are harsh and merciless!"

245. Mahmoud Ibn Omar Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr Kashshāf* (Egypt: Maṭbaʿa Mushrifīyya), under the discussion of the *Sūrah al-Taḥrīm*.
246. *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 6, p. 414.
247. Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal has narrated this hadith in two different ways in his *Musnad* as:

إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ الثَّقَلَيْنِ: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَهْلَ بَيْتِي وَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرَقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَى الْحَوْضِ.

Ahmad has also narrated it in his *Musnad*, and Ṭabarānī has done it in *Muʿjam al-Kabīr*. Also in Ali Ibn Hishām al-Dīn Mut-taqī, *Kanz al-Ummāl* (Ḥaydarābād: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-Oṭh-maniyya, 1378), vol. 1, pp. 47-48, they have narrated as:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ خَلِيفَتَيْنِ: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَجَلَّ جَبَلٌ مَمْدُودٌ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَعَتَرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، وَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرَقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَى الْحَوْضِ.

"The Prophet said: 'I have left two weighty things among you: one is the Book of God, the most exalted, which is like a long rope connecting the earth to the sky; and the next one is my Household. They will not separate from each other until they come to me by the Kawthar [river in Paradise].'"

And Shaykh Ṣadūq Qumī, by means of his chains from Hu-sayn Ibn Yazīd Ibn ʿAbd Aʿlā, from Abdullah Ibn Hasan, narrat-ing it from his father, and he too from Imam Hasan, says that once the Prophet made a speech for the people. After praising God, he said: "O people, my life has come to an end, so I must surrender to God's will: so I am leaving two very weighty things with you. One is the Book of God and the next one is my House-hold. Whoever takes shelter in them will not be lost, so you should learn from those who are the learned."—*Ghāyat al-Marānī*, p. 236, hadith no. 11; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, pp. 517-18. On the whole, this hadith has been narrated by more than 30 men among the companions of the Prophet. Apart from the scholars of the Shiʿa and their authentic books, more than 200 of

the Sunnis' famous narrators have narrated it in different styles. It has been written in their more than 500 well-known books. See Mīr Hāmid Husayn Lakhanawī, *ʿAbaqāt al-Anwār* (Isfahan: Muʾassisa Nashr Kutub-i Makhṭūṭa), vol. 12, p. 1165–88.

248. It is verse 96 in chapter 3, *Al Imrān*, as: *Surely the first House set up for mankind [to worship] was that at Mecca, a Holy Place, and guidance for all being. Therein are apparent signs: [such as] Abraham's Station; and whoever enters it, is surely safe. And it is the duty of all men towards God to come to the House as the pilgrims—for the people who can afford it. But whoever disbelieves, [let him know that] God is Independent of [all] creatures.*
249. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 268.
250. Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn ʿĀmilī has mentioned the heritage of the grandfather and the brothers in his book *al-Naṣṣ wa al-Ijtihād*, pp. 217–18. Bayhaqī in his two books *Sunan* and *Shāʿb al-Imān* and Shaykh in the book *Farāʿid* have extracted it, and Muttaqī Hindī on page 15 of part six of *Kanz al-Ummāl* has narrated: "Omar asked the Prophet about the heritage of the grandfather with the brothers. The Prophet answered: 'O Omar, what do you want to know of this question? I think you cannot learn it until your death.'"

ʿĀmulī says: "During his government, Omar was always worried about this matter. As it is narrated, he had sworn 70 times." It is also drawn from Ibn Abi Shaybah and Bayhaqī in their *Sunan*, and Ibn Saʿd in *Ṭabaqāt*, and the narrator of *Kanz al-Ummāl* in part six, p. 15, from the book *al-Farāʿid*, which says that Ubaydah Salmānī says: "I have learned and memorized one hundred different matters concerning the heritage of the grandfather from Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb." Bayhaqī has mentioned it in *Shāʿb al-Imān*, as it was mentioned on p. 15 of part six of *Kanz al-Ummāl*, saying: "I have given numerous commands about the grandfather, but I have never overlooked the right in them." After that, he followed Zayd Ibn Thābit in this matter. Damīrī has related from Ṭāriq Ibn Shahāb in the section *Ḥayyāh* of the book *Ḥayāt al-Haywān* (lithography) that he has said: "Omar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb has judged differently concerning the inheritance of the grandfather and the brothers." Then he brought together the companions so as to write about the case of the inheritance; however, the companions noticed that he was going to assign to the grandfather as much of the inheritance as to the father. Right at that moment a snake crept out of the hole, and the people dispersed. Omar said: "If God approved of this, He would show

this [as the snake disturbed us, it showed God's disapproval].” Then he went to Zayd Ibn Hārith and said: “I have come here to see to see about the inheritance of the grandfather, to make it similar to that of the father.” Zayd said: “I do not agree with you that their inheritance should be the same.” Omar left him angrily, and then on another occasion sent him a message. Zayd wrote his opinion and sent it to him. When Omar read Zayd's note, he brought some people together as witnesses and read his writing to them, and then said: “Zayd has something to say about the grandfather and I have approved it for him.”

Ayatollāh ‘Āmili has mentioned in a footnote: “Whoever wants to know Omar's anxiety about this matter should refer to the *Ṣiḥāḥ* and *Masānid* of the Sunnis; and you would do better to refer to *al-Farā'id*, *Kanz al-Ummāl*, and *Mustadrak*.

Now that the discussion has come to this point, it is better to recount in brief another one of Omar's opinions against the customs and traditions of the Prophet. Ayatollāh Āmuli has mentioned it in his book, pp. 218–19, section 31 about common duty, and it is known as the case of Himāriyyah. In brief, it is this: a woman died leaving her mother and husband, along with two brothers of her mother from a different father, and then two other brothers from the same father and mother. The situation occurred twice at the time of the second caliph, and they referred both of them to the caliph. The first time, the caliph ordered him to give half of his share and to give the mother one-sixth of the whole amount, and the rest, which was a third of the amount, to the brothers and mothers. In that case all the inheritance would be paid to the right persons and there would remain nothing more for the brothers of the dead father and mother.

The second time, the caliph wanted to share the inheritance in the same way when one of the paternal and maternal brothers said:

إِنْ أَهْلًا كُنْ حِلًّا أَشْرَكَكَ فِي قِرَابَةِ أُمَّةٍ.

“O Omar, suppose that our father was a donkey; do consider us as partners with our maternal brothers.” Omar accepted their requests and divided the remaining third of the inheritance among them equally, with each of them receiving half of a sixth share. A man who was passing by said: “But in the past you did not treat the maternal brother like the paternal ones!” Omar

answered: "It was our command in the past, and today we have issued a command to suit today!"

Ayatollāh ʿĀmilī has mentioned in a footnote:

Bayhaqī and Ibn Abi Shaybah have mentioned this case in their *Sunan*, and so has ʿAbd al-Razzāq in his *Jāmiʿ* relating *Kanz al-Ummāl* from the book of *Farāʿid*, in the beginning of the book, p. 2, hadith no. 110. Fāḍil Sharqāwī has mentioned this case in the margin of the book written by Shaykh Zakariyyā Anṣārī. The author of the book *Majmaʿ al-Anhur fī Sharh Muṭlaq al-Abḥur* says:

In the beginning of this case, Omar rejected the idea of sharing, but later on he changed his mind. The reason for his changing his mind was that once he gave his own personal verdict, one of the paternal and maternal brothers stood up and said: "O Commander of the believers, suppose that we accepted that our father was a donkey so are we not from the same mother?" Omar felt ashamed, paused for a short time, and said: "You are quite right, all of you are from the same mother." Therefore he considered all of them to be partners and to be entitled to receive equal shares of the inheritance.

Ahmad Amīn has mentioned this story in just the same way in brief, on p. 285 of *Hayāt al-ʿAqlī*, which is part one of *Fajr al-Islam*. Once again Ayatollāh ʿĀmilī says:

This case is known as the case of Himāriyyah, because the man said: "Suppose our father was a donkey." It can also be called the case of Hijriyyah or Yamiyyah, because it is narrated that some of them said to Omar: "Suppose our father was a piece of stone and was cast into the sea!" It is also known as the case of Omariyyah because Omar had different opinions on the case. It is also known as the common case. It is one of the disputed verdicts among the four major Sunni Faqīhs; they have differences on this case. The verdict of Abu Ḥanīfa and two of his companions, as well as those of Ahmad Ḥanbal, Zafar, and Ibn Abi Laylā, following Omar's view—was that two step-brothers had no share, but Malik and Shāfiʿī did not follow this verdict.

251. Hasan Ibn Ali Ṭūsī, *al-Khilāf fī al-Fiqh* (Tehran: Maṭbaʿa-ye Rangī, 1382 AH), vol. 2, p. 72, question 109.
252. Muhammad Hasan Najafi, *Jawāhir al-Kalām* (lithograph), vol. 39, p. 162.
253. We discussed in detail the very question in this series of books of *Knowing the Imams*, vol. 11, lessons 161–65.

254. Sayyid Raḍī has mentioned this dialogue in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, in the section on wisdom, saying no. 317, and from ed. M. ‘Abduh, in vol. 2, p. 211.
255. Sayyid Raḍī has mentioned this subject in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 168, and it is explained in the Egypt edition, ed. M. ‘Abduh, vol. 1, pp. 317-18 that the Imam told the man:

Those people of yours, who have sent you here, have done so to investigate this land to find out a pasture suitable for you and your animals to graze, and then to let them know to come here to live. Therefore, you have spotted such a land and have turned to your people and informed them of such a fruitful land, but they did not believe you; therefore they went to see the land on their own, and then what would you do?

The man answered: "In that case I will leave them, and continue to find another way to reach water." Then the Imam told him: "In that case, lend me your hand and pay homage to me!" This kind of interpretation is better than the explanation of Ibn Shahr Āshūb's *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 269, and lithograph edition, vol. 2, p. 46 that we already mentioned in this volume, because in these two printings, the statement

فَخَالَفُوا إِلَى الْمَعَاشِ وَالْجَادِبِ مَا كُنْتُ صَانِعًا قَالَ كُنْتُ تَارِكُهُمْ وَمَحَالِّقَهُمْ إِلَى الْكَلَاءِ وَالْمَاءِ.

has not been mentioned, and it proves that the statement of *Nahj al-Balāghah* is valid.

256. See the first sermon of *Nahj al-Balāghah*.
257. The word *anbāt* is the plural for *nabaṭ*; they were some people who used to live between Iraq and Sham, and their business was selling flour and olive oil. See Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 624.
258. The first part of verse 3 from *Sūrat al-Barā’at*:

وَأَذَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ

...and [this is] a proclamation from God and His Messenger to all people on the day of the Greater [hajj] Pilgrimage, God and His Messenger refrain from the idolaters. As it is seen the word

رَسُولُهُ

is pronounced with the vowel "o" on the final letter, but if it is read with the vowel "a," as that businessman did, the meaning totally changes. In that case it means: "God refrains from the

- idolaters and His Messenger!" It was why the Arab took his recitation as a kind of blasphemy and beat him on the head!
259. Mustashār 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Jundī has mentioned it in the very important book *al-Imam Ja'far Ṣādiq* (Cairo: al-Majlis al-A'la, 1397 AH), in the footnote on page 29. Anbārī has narrated in *Tārīkh al-Udabā* that the main reason that Ali established the rules for grammar and writing is, as Abu al-Aswad has narrated:

I [Abu al-Aswad] went to Ali and found that there was a written letter in his hand, so I asked him: "O Master of the Faithful, what is this about?" He answered: "I investigated the language of the Arabs and found that because of their conversation with non-Arabs, they have lost the beauty of their language, so I decided to write the correct language for them to practice and correct their way of speaking and grammar." Then the Imam gave it to me and I read it; it was written: "On the whole, a statement is composed of noun, verb, and preposition: the noun generally stands for the doer or one who does something or whom something is done upon; a verb is that which represents an action in the sentence; and the preposition joins them together, that is, they are relations between the noun and the verb." Then the Imam told me: "Now you add something to it if you know. And know that, O Abu al-Aswad, nouns are of three kinds: a manifest noun, a pronoun, and that which is neither manifest nor pronoun. And the people's priority is to understand what each part of speech is about."

Abu al-Aswad says:

I added something to it and put some references and question forms in his writing, and then when I handed it back to him, he told me to put them all together. After that, as much as I wrote and added to it, I presented it to the Imam, and he checked it and told me how to alter some words and styles and correct it. I carried on until it was satisfactory and the Imam told me: "How good this grammar looks! You have done well, and now let's recall the knowledge of the rules of writing." It must be known that it was a hard job for the Imam while almost every day being at war.

Abu al-Aswad also put the vowels in the right places to make it easy to read for the common people. Khalīl, another grammarian, is also similar to Abu al-Aswad, and he is the first writer of *al-Mu'jam* and the dictionary, having written rules about how to spell and write words. However, of everything that has been said so far, Ali is the main gate for this knowledge of Arabic words and styles. The fluency of Ali in Arabic is well

known and he is one of the rare orators of the Arabs, and there is none to write sermons like him.

260. The best proof for the eloquence of the Imam is his *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Concerning it George Jurdāq has explained well in his book *Ṣawt al-‘Idālat al-Insāniyya* (Beirut, 1956), p. 684:

He was fluent in the language of the old ignorant nation and so was he eloquent in the statements of the Prophet; he used both styles in his speech. On the whole, his fluency in language was below that of the statements of God but above the speech of the people. No wonder he had all the qualities of a perfectly fluent person so as to be the best rhetorician among the people.

261. Āqā Bozorg Tehrani, *al-Dharī‘ah*, vol. 7, pp. 193 and 189.
262. This elegy is from Ḥimyarī’s 24-line poem in his *Dīvān*, from page 53 to 58, which he has drawn from *A‘yān al-Shi‘a* and *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb. The first line in the original poem is:

بيت الرسالة والنيوة والذين - نَعْدَمُ لِنُؤْتِيَا شِفَاءَ

and when he comes to lines 14 and 15, he says:

مَنْ كَانَ أَعْلَمَهُمْ وَأَقْضَاهُمْ وَمَنْ جَمَلَ الزُّعْمَةِ وَالزُّعَاةَ سِوَاءَ . مَنْ كُنَ بِأَبْ بَابِ مَدِينَةِ الْعِلْمِ الَّذِي - ذَكَرَ
الْقُرُولَ وَفُتْرَ الْإِنْبَاءِ .

“He is the wisest among them, and he is the most knowledgeable in judgment among them all. He is the one who deals with the commanders and common people equally. He is the gate of knowledge; he is the one who explains to man the revelations and removes the veil from the face of the secrets and interprets them.”

263. My honorable grandfather, Sayyid Ibrahim Lavāsānī, the son of Ayatollāh Ḥājī Mīrzā Hasan Lavāsānī, has mentioned in his book *Kashkūl-i Laṭīf* (Tehran), p. 33:

It is narrated that Mu‘āwīyah Ibn Abi Sufyān wrote the phrases

عَلَا فَنَرَى

and

عَلَا فَنَرَى

with no dots on the letters to the Imam. He meant the first word to mean "high rank," and the second one to mean a pan for cooking food, which in Arabic is written

عَلَا قَدْرِي، عَلَا قَدْرِي.

Then the Imam also wrote this sentence:

عَرِكَ عَرِكَ فَصَارَ فَصَارَ ذَلِكَ فَاحِشَ فَاحِشَ فَتَلَكَ فَتَلَكَ بَهْدِي.

with no dots on it. However, Mu'āwiyah did not catch what the Imam meant by that and was very surprised! He could not make out that it read as:

عَرِكَ عَرِكَ، فَصَارَ فَصَارَ ذَلِكَ، فَاحِشَ فَاحِشَ فَتَلَكَ فَتَلَكَ بَهْدِي!

264. This sermon, which is one of the longest ones, is mentioned by the late Hujjat Lavāsānī in his *Kashkūl*, pp. 30–33.
265. The late Lavāsānī has mentioned another sermon of Ali Ibn Abi Tālib that lacked dots in his *Kashkūl*, pp. 25–26. It begins:

الحمد لله الملك المحمود، المالك الودود، مصوّر كل مولود ومآل كل مطرود.

"Praise belongs to the Laudable King, the all-Loving Owner, the Fashioner of all of existence and the Final Source of all who perish!"

266. This sentence is explained twice by the Imam in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, the first time in sermon 21, where he says:

فإن الغاية أمامكم، وإن زوّاء كرا الشاعة تحمّوكم تحمّموا تلتّموا، فإنما يخطئ أولكم أعزركم.

"And indeed your final aim is to come [in the near future]. In your past, there were some times [the remembrance of] which may stop you [from making progress]. Keep yourself light and overtake in your [spiritual] journey. Your future is awaited by your past." Here, Sayyid Raḍī says:

This is a statement below the statement of God and the statement of the Holy Prophet, and if it is compared with any other statements, it stands as first among them. So far, no one has heard a saying as short as

تَحَمّمُوا تَلْتَمُوا

with so vast a meaning! It is wisdom very deep in meaning. The next saying of his is sermon 165. Here, after speaking about God's Book and then advising the good-doers, he says:

"Have concern about death, as it is for any individual. The people are in front of you and in your past, and there are some events [the remembrance of] which may stop you [from making progress]. Keep yourself light and overtake in your spiritual journey." (*Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. M. 'Abduh, the first sermon, pp. 58–59, and the second sermon, pp. 314–15.

267. It is written in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, the section on wisdom:

قيمة كل امرء ما يحسنه

"The value of a man is according to his knowledge (how well he has learned it and how he has used it)." Sayyid Raḍī says: "This is one of those statements beyond value; no statement can be compared with it!" (*Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 2, p. 154.)

268. Verse 247 in *sūrah* 2, states: Then, their prophet said to them, "God has indeed sent Saul as a king for you." They said, "How could he govern over us when we are more suitable to govern than him? And he has not been granted wealth!" He said, "God has chosen him above you and has given him plenty of wisdom and status. And God bestows His sovereignty to anyone He will; for God is Knowing and the Bestower [of power]!"
269. Verse 179 of *sūrah* 2 states: ...and in retaliation, there is life for you, O men of reason [so] that you may be God-fearing!
270. 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī has mentioned in *al-Mizān*, vol. 20, p. 323 that the term *maw'ūdāt* means "burying a girl alive." Thus such a girl must be born alive and then to be buried; otherwise the meaning of the word is not right. This is the same meaning that Ali uses when he says that the seven processes of a child in the womb must be carried out. Then finally the baby becomes complete and is born, so the meaning of the term is complete. In other words, if these processes are not completed one after another, then the meaning of *maw'ūdāt* is not correct. The meaning of the phrase is not

وإذا الولودة سلت.

However, as the Imam has translated it, the *janīn* is as the human, and the law and rule for it is the same as for an individual, and one who kills it must pay the whole blood-money in expiation. The expiation for *nufsa* is 20 *dinars* and for *'alaqah* 40 *dinars*; the expiation for *muḍqah* is 60 *dinars*, the expiation for the bone is 80 *dinars*, and the expiation for the bones covering the flesh is 100 *dinars*. These five processes along with the first one

make the six main processes, and then when the soul in inspired within, it becomes a complete human being, and the blood-money becomes the same as that for a perfect man, that is, 1000 *dinars*. And the Imam states that the word *maw'ūdāt* finds its value when all these processes are fulfilled, and when the baby is born, it is a real and perfect human being. That is, He created man of an extraction of clay, and then placed him as a drop of semen in a secure resting-place. Then He turned the semen into a clot, and then turned the clot into tissue; and then He turned the tissue into bones and clothed the bones with flesh. Then, [by blowing His soul in it,] He produced it as a fresh creation; so when someone kills it at the time of birth, the blood-money must be paid in whole.

271. In the Holy Qur'an, *Sūrah al-Mu'minun*, verses 12–14, it states: ...and We created man of an extraction of clay; then We placed him as a drop of semen in a secure resting-place. Then We turned the semen into a clot; next We turned the clot into tissue; and then We turned the tissue into bones and clothed the bones with flesh. Then, [by blowing Our soul in it,] We produced it as a fresh creation; so Pure and Blessed is God, Best of creators!
272. *Ghurur al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim* (1383 AH) by 'Abd al-Wāhid Ibn Muhammad Tamīmī Āmidī. It is also known as *al-Ghurur wa al-Durar*. He has collected 11,050 sayings of Imam Ali in it. Then Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad Khānsārī wrote a commentary on it. It was published in six volumes in 1383 AH with corrections and footnotes by Mīr Jalāl al-Dīn Husayni Armawī; Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham Ibn Ali Ibn Maytham Baḥrānī has written an explanation of a collection of Imam Ali's short sayings (*kalimāt al-qīṣār*). This book was published by Mīr Jalal al-Dīn Husayni Armawī in 1390 AH. There are also two other explanations on one hundred sayings of Imam Ali (*kalimāt al-qīṣār*): first from 'Abd al-Wahāb and the second from Rashīd Waṭwāt. These three explanations are published in one volume. Another work of the Imam is his judgments that Sayyid Raḍī has collected in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, which are mentioned after the sermons and letters of the Imam. In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. M. 'Abduh, the editor says in a footnote that the wisdoms and sayings are 480 altogether. Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd explains 999 short words of the Imam in the final part of *Nahj al-Balāghah*.

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī Ḥanafī mentions 70 short hadiths about the Household in his book *Yanābī' al-Mawadda* (Istanbul: Maṭba'a Akhtar, 1391 AH), pp. 230 to 241. Let it be known

that Mas'ūdī has mentioned some of the short sayings of the Prophet in *Murūj al-Dhihab*, vol. 2, pp. 299–303. He has said: “These words were specific to the Imam and no one before him had said anything like that.”

273. There was a brief explanation about this noble hadith in vol. 3 of *Knowing the Resurrection* in session 17.

274. Sayyid Raḍī has mentioned these statements along with some other statements in the introduction to *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Mullā Faṭḥallah Kāshī, the commentator of *Nahj al-Balāghah* in Persian, says when explaining the foregoing, that during *Laylat al-Harir*, in Ṣifḥīn, the Imam made a thousand sets of prayers, and on the same night, he sent to Hell 523 hypocrites—to be kept there until the Day of Resurrection. And his position is so high that not even a man of intellect can imagine it in his mind.

It is according to the loftiness of his position that he has unveiled the knowledge of the past, and now the points on the Torah and the problems in the Psalms; how can one be like him, even in a hundred centuries?

275. We discussed the judgment of the Imam in these two cases in vol. 11 of *Knowing the Imams*.

276. Besides in *al-Manāqib*, Shaykh Ṭabarsī has also mentioned this story of the peasant in *Iḥtijāj* (Najaf: lithography), vol. 1, pp. 355–37, and its chain is from Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr. The annotator says:

Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr Ibn Hishām Asadī was from Kūfa. He used to live in Mecca and was one of the Companions. Shaykh Ṭūsī has mentioned that he was one of the companions of Imam Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, and ʿAllāmah Ḥillī has also mentioned him in his *Khulāṣah*, part one. It is narrated from Imam Ṣādiq that Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr was one of the followers of Imam Sajjād (Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn). Imam Sajjād used to admire his behavior. He was murdered by Ḥajjāj without any excuse except that he was one of the followers of Imam Sajjād. Ḥajjāj asked him: “What is your opinion about Abu Bakr and Omar? Are they in Hell or Paradise?” He answered: “If I enter Paradise, I will come to know whether they are there, and if I enter Hell then I will understand who are there.” Ḥajjāj asked: “What is your opinion about the caliphs?” Sa'īd answered: “But I am on no authority over them.” He then asked: “Which of them is most beloved in your sight?” He answered: “The one that my Creator is pleased with.” “So which one do you think the Creator is satisfied with?” Sa'īd answered: “The knowledge of this question is with One Who knows their secrets and thoughts.” Ḥajjāj asked: “Are you frightened to tell me the truth?” Sa'īd said: “No, I am not, but I do not like telling lies!” (It was then that Ḥajjāj

commanded his men to spread a piece of leather rug and cut his neck off on it.) When they were beheading Sa'īd, he implored: "O God, give not Ḥajjāj a second chance to behead anyone else as he is doing to me!" Sa'īd's murder was in the year 95 AH, and he was 49 years old then, and after Sa'īd's death, Ḥajjāj was alive only 15 days because of Sa'īd's cursing him! Sa'īd was one of the authorized narrators (*thiqāī*), and he was famous in jurisprudence, piety, and interpretation. He had received his knowledge from Ibn Abbās. Whenever the people of Kūfa went to Mecca to ask their questions from Ibn Abbās, he said: "Why, is there not among you Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr?" He was most learned and was known as "expert and aware in his knowledge." Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr used to recite the Qur'an swiftly, and as it is said there was not anyone on the earth so expert in recitation of the Qur'an as he. (*Rijāl* of Ṭūsī, p. 90; 'Allāmah Hillī, *Khulāṣa* (lithography), p. 79; Muhammad Ibn Omar Khasshi, *Ikhtiyār Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*, known as *Rijāl al-Kashshī*, p. 110; Shaykh Abbās Qumī, *Safinat al-Bihar* (Najaf: lithograph, 1355 AH), vol. 1, p. 621; *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, vol. 4, p. 11.

277. The late Sayyid Hibbat al-Dīn Shahrastānī has narrated in *al-Ḥay'at wa al-Islām* (Dar al-Thiqāfa), p. 353, from the book *Faraj al-Mahmūm* of Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs and *Bihār al-Anwār* by the means of many chains from Imam Ali that Sar Saḥīl, the peasant, to test the astronomer said: "Give me some information of the length of Asad, how far is it from Maṭālī^c, and the distance between *zuhra* and *tawābī^c*." Then Shahrastānī explains:

It is known among contemporary scholars that *aqmār* [plural of *qamar* / planets like the moon] are called *tawābī^c* (dependents). It is because in their movement [elliptical orbit round a star] they follow the other planets, and for their appearance they depend on the stars following the sun. They call the suns *jawāmi^c* because they attract the other planets in the special orders of them. They believe that the planets are mediators between moons and the suns. The planets are also considered to be the daughters of *jawāmi^c* and the suns, and they are under the influence of the moons [*aqmār*].

According to this explanation, the statement of Imam Ali becomes clear where he explains about *zuhrah*, where he denies that it is like moons or *jawāmi^c* (sun). If Sar Saḥīl was aware of today's knowledge, the Imam would tell him: "*Zuhrah* is an agent between *tawābī^c* and *jawāmi^c*. That is, the relation of the moons to the planets is like the relation of the planets to the suns."⁶⁶ Here, the purpose of the Imam was that *zuhrah* was known to everyone.

278. Shaykh Ṭūsī has mentioned this hadith in *Ihtijāj* (Najaf: Nu'mān Nashr), vol. 1, pp. 355–57; the meaning of

كِر الطالع من الأسد

in Arabic is: "Now how much has the month of *Asad* (sign of Leo) risen?" And the term

والشاعات

means: "What is the age of the planets?" And perhaps the meaning of

سراری

is the hidden planets, because of its similarity with

کیز خفته .

The word

دراری

means the biggest and brightest star, and

دراری

and

سراری

are two words unknown to the astronomers.

Therefore, after all these explanations, the Imam drew the peasant's attention to his ignorance, not only about the knowledge of stars but about many more things.

It is said in *Qāmūs*:

The word *biṭrīq* refers to the title of one of the Romans' majors in the army who has thousands of soldiers under his control, and *dayyān* is a Jewish Rabbi. In some different copies, it is written that the word *dayyān* means a large earthenware jar. The word

صاحبی

in Arabic refers to the Prophet of God. The term

لا شرقی ولا غربی

is drawn from the statement of God the Almighty:

لا شرقية ولا غربية

Here it means: We do not belong to any other nations, and our attitudes are not the same as theirs. They follow the stars and their own invented objects, whereas we have our own right way to follow.

They are the signs of the firmament, as they receive their light from them.

279. In *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 14, p. 332, Majlisī has mentioned the possibility and impossibility of some metals being changed into other forms, in the section of *Kitāb al-Asmā wa al-ʿĀlam*. He has said:

Some wise people have said that gold and silver can be changed by the industry. Ibn Sīnā has said that changing a metal into another metal is impossible, because the nature of each metal varies from the others, and some substantial conditions are needed to change the essence of entities that are impossible after their creation.

280. It is narrated from Maydānī's *Majmaʿ al-Anthāl* that in Arab culture, the night when the virginity of a girl is removed is called *Laylat al-Shaybāʾ*, and at the same night, the man's affair and activity is said to be *Laylat Ḥarrah*. If a man is unable to fulfil it, it is said: "The man lost the game of *Layla Ḥarrah*." There is a saying in Arabic concerning the very night. It is: "A woman never forgets the night when one has removed her virginity, and has become her man and her supporter in life." Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 54.
281. Here, Muʿāwīyah wanted to say to Abu Ayyūb Anṣārī that he was one of the murderers of Othman, and my situation here is like that of Shaybāʾ, who is not going to forget someone who caused my blood to flow. By your cooperation in killing Othman you have made me rise against you and retaliate against you. And then, through his intelligence, Imam Ali understood Muʿāwīyah's trick.
282. They have said a lot about the languages of the birds. Some believe that they too have an alphabet like us, and they communicate their needs by means of it. However, some say they communicate by making different kinds of signs and sounds. They have said enough about the languages of the birds and how Holy Solomon used to communicate with them. A different group believe that God taught the system of the birds' communication to Solomon; and by that means he became an expert in the birds' languages. But apparently the training of Solomon, and of Imam Ali and the other Imams, like Imam Riḍā, who had

conversations with a gazelle, and the speech of the wild animals of the zoo and a place called Birkat al-Sibā' in which they imprisoned Imam Hādī, is all accomplished through their pure souls and the blessings that they have received. When a pious man's soul is strengthened and it leaves the passions behind, it becomes so vast and great that it dominates all being: people, birds, animals on the land and the sea, the *jinn*, and the angels—in sum, whatever and whoever has been created by God. He finds the power to speak with almost all creatures—he speaks with them with words or simply makes sounds and signs for them to understand. It is said that all animals are obedient to a believing person. It is narrated about Sa'īd Ibn Jābir that when they arrested him and took him to Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf, on the way he stopped to pray and recite the Qur'an at night. A great many wild animals gathered around him without disturbing him. There are other similar events in the Muslim world.

How nicely and greatly the late Ḥājī Mirzā Ḥabībullah Khorasani has composed this piece:

From that Khosro, who was called Jamshīd, I saw a piece of writing
 at the brim of a goblet,
 In searching for God, you have to run round a circle like a pair of
 compasses night and day,
 Then [when] one caliper [of compasses] reaches the other, the be-
 ginning and the end become just one,
 Search for this secret throughout history, [and become] like
 Khosro, who became famous in history [for his love]
 Tell me who was Jam, who tamed the birds and fish by his skill
 and charm,
 It is just by the charm of my saint that the rooster of the Throne
 [divine beloved] has fallen into a trap,
 The heart of my saint is my magic, which sometimes boils and
 sometimes is calm,
 If there are a thousand [divine] names for Haqq, when you add
 them up, they become just One,
 Say that the first was Ali, so was the last Ali, so Ali was hidden
 and he was apparent.

283. It is said in *Aqrab al-Mawārid* that the word

الدخن

in Arabic is a kind of tiny soft seed resembling very hard little seeds that mostly small birds, like sparrows, peck. But in

there is a long discussion on this word. It is said that the tiny and yellow arzans are better than the coarse ones. By using this example, Ali tells the man that his small plot of land is better than his neighbors' vast plot of land, and that is why his taxes exceeded theirs.

284. By means of this hadith of the Imam, it becomes clear that his speech was given when the bell started clanging, and at its start, the Imam began lecturing. He brought it to an end when the bell stopped.
285. Ibn Shahr Āshūb has narrated the monk's embracing of Islam in a different way. In *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 426, he has narrated it in the following way:

Zayd and Ṣaḥṣaḥ, the sons of Ṣuḥān, and Barā' Ibn Sabara, Aṣbagh Ibn Nubātah, Jābir Ibn Sharaḥbil, and Mahmoud Ibn Kawwā' have narrated:

A man (Ali) was interpreting the bell sound and he said: "Take me to that man with the short hair and the bulky stomach." When they took him to Ali, he said: "I have found all his attributes in the Bible and now I bear witness that he is the successor and cousin of the holy Prophet." When he was close to the Imam, the Imam said to him: "If you have come to me to embrace Islam, so let me strengthen your belief." The monk said: "Yes, I have." Then the Imam said: "Now take off your loose garment and show to your friends the two spots between your two shoulders!" So on the spot, the monk recited: "I bear witness that there is no deity but God, and Muhammad is His slave and Messenger." Soon after he cried out, he fell down and died! Imam Ali said: "His life in Islam was short; however, he will receive endless blessings and rewards from his Creator."

286. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, pp. 268-77, and lithography, vol. 2, pp. 44-57.
287. *Tadhkirat al-Khawāṣṣ*, pp. 85-87; 'Allāmah Amīnī has narrated this hadith in detail in *al-Ghadir*, vol. 6, pp. 247-49, from *Tadhkirat* and from *Zany al-Fatā fi Sharh Sura-Hal Atā*, by Ḥāfiẓ 'Āṣimī.
288. Mustashār 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Jundī has said in *al-Imam Ja'far Ṣādiq*,

Ṣādiq has said about the position and rank of Ali in *The Knowledge of Islam*:

Ali upon him be peace, was the only one who encompassed the whole knowledge of the Qur'an and jurisprudence. It is because the Holy Prophet prayed for him and in the meantime commanded him to judge among the people. Whenever they took his judgments to the Holy Prophet, he approved and signed them. When the Prophet assigned him the job, he swore by God not to sit idle but to finish the completion of the Qur'an. Although he was busy completing the Qur'an, he carried out his judgments and looked after the affairs of Islam. That is, whatever he knew in jurisprudence he put into practice so as to answer people's questions and solve their cases.

He says in the section in the gloss,

That is why Ali was called the Imam of *al-Mufasssirūn*. Ṣaʿīd Ibn Jubayr says:

I asked Ibn Abbās if there is any repentance for a believer who has deliberately killed another believer. He said: "No, there is not." Then, when I recited him a verse from the *Sūrah al-Furqān*, he said: "This is a Meccan verse but the Medinan verse annuls it, which says: *whoever kills a believer deliberately, his dwelling is Hell and he will remain therein forever*."

It has been narrated that Ibn Abbās discussed this verse with Ali. Ali asked him: "How do you claim this verse is one of the decisive verses?" He answered: "Because of the excessive promises and warnings in it." Ali said: "God has annulled this verse in favor of two verses in the Qur'an: for a verse before and another verse after it. The first one is God's statement:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا قَدْ سِوَا ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا

...surely God does not forgive that a partner be ascribed to Him, but He forgives other things lighter than that. Anyone who sets up any partners with God has indeed invented an awful sin. However, in the next verse, the statement of God, the Almighty is:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا قَدْ سِوَا ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا

And the commentators add to these verses that God has stated:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ إِلَىٰ
قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَىٰ: وَمَنْ ظَنَّنِي مِمَّنَّ

And those who do not call upon other deities along with Allah, nor ever kill anyone whom God has forbidden except through the law, and then He has made an exception that unless he repents and does the righteous things! It is here that Ibn Abbās's knowledge becomes clear to you; but when they asked him about his knowledge compared to his cousin (Ali)'s knowledge, he answered: "Compared to Ali's knowledge, mine is a tiny drop in a vast ocean!"

289. This is an expression:

لَوَثَّيْتُ لِي الْوَسَادَةُ

It means adhering to the command of the *wilāyat*, because the word

الوسادة

means a bolster to rest one's head on or to lean back on. It is generally used by rulers and commanders sitting on couches. Therefore, the Imam wanted to say: "I am not the governor at the moment, but if they let me have authority and sit on the couch, I would judge every nation by its own Book." This represents the high knowledge of the Imam and his understanding of all the Holy Books.

290. Altogether this elegy is in five lines which, in the *Divān* of Ḥimyarī, p. 128, is taken from *A'yān al-Shi'a* and *al-Manāqib*. The first and second lines read:

Muhammad is the best among the messengers and next to him is
Ali Ibn Abi Tālib;

This one is the Prophet and Ali is his successor, in whose presence
the world kneels down!

291. These four lines are in the *Divān* of Ḥimyarī, p. 460, which are taken from *A'yān al-Shi'a* and *al-Manāqib*.

292. The most correct way was known by Muhammad, and the Qur'an was sent down in his houses. They are the real proofs of God among the people and there is no doubt about their Guardianship and Imamate, nor about the prophethood of their grandfather, the

Prophet. Their swords are satisfied with the blood of their enemies, and they are quenched with the gushing blood of the opponents, especially that of Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, who is of the highest rank and position and who is the main fright of their enemies. When his sword is held up against his enemies, they can do nothing but surrender. There is a constant battle between him and his enemies. The great tidings and the Ark of Noah as well the gate to God is he; therefore, nothing more can be said about his greatness.

In *Nāme-yi Dāneshvarān Nāshiri* (Dār al-Fikr, 1296 AH), vol. 5, pp. 405–7 there has been a discussion about the composer of this elegy. It is said:

Muhaddith Nishaburi has related the above statement to Ibn Fārīd Miṣrī, the famous Shi'a scholar. Sepehr Kashani in *Nāsikh al-Tawārikh* and the author of *Kifāyat al-Khiṣām*, which is the translation of *Ghāyat al-Marām*, says it is known to be from 'Amr Ibn 'Āṣ. Even the author of *Kifāyat al-Khiṣām* says:

Imam Fakhr Rāzī in his *Tafsir* has made it clear that some of the narrators, like Muḥadhab al-Dīn Ahmad Ibn Riḍā in his *Tuḥfat al-Dhakhā'ir*, has mentioned this elegy, which was composed for the Day of Ghadīr, and has related it to 'Amr Ibn 'Āṣ. Sepehr, under the elegy for the Day of Ghadīr, has narrated this elegy to be from 'Amr Ibn 'Āṣ and he has added two lines to it:

على الندوة الذهب المصق وبقى الناس كلهم تراب
هو البكاء في الحراب لئلا هو الصحاك إذا اشتد الضراب

Ali is the pearl and pure gold, and the remaining people are all soil;

It is he who weeps at the dark altar at night, and during the day he fights with the enemy smilingly.

Then, he says, while explaining the condition of Ali Ibn Abdullah, the Shi'a poet, who is called Nāshī Akbar, he believes this elegy is from Nāshī. Nāshī has said:

In the year 125 AH, I used to dictate this poem and some people wrote it down, at that time, Abū Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī. One day I read this elegy to him as: "As if his spear is a memory which is never forgotten, it is similar to the sword in

Ghadir which presses their necks." When I read this to them, I noticed that Abu al-Ṭālib Mutanabbī wrote it down. He took it away with him and some time later wrote it in his elegy!

In any case, the writer of *Nāme-yi Dāneshvarān Nāshīrī* believes that this poem is from Nāshī Akbar, because its style is not consistent with that of the other elegies, and it is close to the style of the first line of his elegy.

293. Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī has extracted this part from *Dhakhā'ir al-Uqbā* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qudsi, 1356 AH), p. 83, from Ahmad in *al-Manāqib*, and Baghawī in *Mu'jam* from Abu Omar.
294. This is a part of *sūrah* 36, verse 12 which says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَرَهُمْ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ

It is indeed We Who revive the dead and write down whatever they have sent ahead and their effects [they have left behind]; and We have recorded everything in the Glorious Divine Ledger.

295. A part of verse 59, *sūrah* 6, *al-An'ām*:

وَعِنْدَ مَفْطَحِ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ يُعَلِّمُ مَا فِي الْغَيْبِ وَلَا يُظْهِرُ لَهَا شَيْئًا مِنْهُ إِلَّا يُرِيدُ الْإِذَا بَلَغَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَمْلَهُ لَوْ كَانَ يُفِيقُ
ظُلُمَاتٍ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَظِيٍّ وَلَا بِاسٍ فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ

And with Him are the keys to the Unseen, and [no one] but He knows them! He knows whatever exists in the earth and what is at the sea; no leaf falls but He knows it, not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor any tender or withered [stalk falls] unless it is [recorded] in a manifest Book.

296. Related to verse 7, *sūrah* 3, *Āl-Imrān*:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَكِّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

It is He Who sent down to you the Book, wherein are [clear] decisive verses, which are the essence of the Book, and some are ambiguous [and need to be commented on]. But those, whose hearts are infected, follow the ambiguous ones seeking to create dissension by giving [incorrect] interpretation to it. Yet no one but God knows the interpretation of it—and those well-versed in knowledge, who say, "We believe in it; it is all from our Lord." But none takes admonition except those who possess intellects.

297. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib* vol. 1, pp. 263–66.

298. A part of the verse 28, from *sūrah* 35, *Fātir*: ...and [We created] from men, and wild beasts and livestock — diverse are their colours. Yet only those of His obedient worshippers be wary of God who have knowledge; surely God is Oft-forgiving All-mighty
299. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 258.
300. Ibid. p. 264.
301. Ibrahim Ibn Muhammad Ibn Mu'ayyid Ḥammu'ī has narrated this sermon up to here in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* (Beirut: Mu'assisa-ye Mahmoudi, 1400 AH), vol. 1, pp. 340 and 341, by means of his chains from Abu al-Bakhtari, under hadith no. 263; its final part is: "And you are reciting the Qur'an, but you do not use your reason!" However, Muwaffaq Ibn Ahmad Khārazmī by means of his chains from Abu al-Bakhtari in his book *al-Manāqib* (Najaf: Maṭba'a Ḥaydariyya), writes it up to "Do you not use reason?" p. 47.
302. By saying so, the Imam wants to negate the attributes from God, according to the Holy Lofty Monotheism, because every attribute is a limitation—because by that attribution, it would be as if the attributed essence was measured by description. As there is no limitation and measurement in the essence of the Lofty Being. The attributes and names are limited, and they are too little to attribute to Oneness. That is why he states:

God is *Latīfal-Litāfa*, and He is attributed with Kindness and Grace. God is *Latīfal-Litāfa*; that is, He is above pureness! He is the Originator of the fire attributes. It is the same with the other attributes. For example, the attribute of greatness: greatness is said to be for something against which there are small things. But God is the Most Exalted and one cannot compare Him with contingent adjectives; He is greater than the word "greatness"! That is, He is greater than the meaning of greatness. So He is greater than the great, and must not be attributed with the word "great." Compared to attributes of greatness, God is Greater, because it is He who has created the great and greatness. On the whole, all the names and attributes of God the Loftiest are limited just because He is the chief source of those names and attributes; all those names and attributes are reflections from the Main Source. So this is the real meaning of the Imam's words in his first sermon in *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

وكمال الاخلاص نفى الصفات عنه، لشهادة كل صفة أنها غير الموصوف، وشهادة
كل موصوف أنه غير الصفة

The perfection of a Pure Existence is to negate His attributes, because every attribute represents something being qualified, and every attribute proves it is something rather than that which is attributed, and any attribution proves it is other than the attributes [while God does not separate from His perfectional attributes, and the separation between His Essence and attributes is unimaginable].

303. The first verse in *sūrah 4, al-Nisā*², is:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَكُمْ وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا.

...O mankind, be wary of your Lord, Who created you from a single soul, and created its mate from it, and spread abroad many men and women from them both. And be wary of God by [Name of] Him you demand one another—and [be careful of your duty toward] the blood-ties, [for] indeed God is ever Watcher over you. This verse clearly says that humans originate from only two, Adam and Eve. And the necessity is that their sons and daughters had to marry one another, and it was nothing to be avoided. In the beginning it was considered lawful and then became unlawful. There is a hadith in this case from Imam Sajjād in *Ihtijāj* telling the story of the marriage of Hābīl with Bluzā, Qābīl's twin sister, as well as Qābīl's marriage with Iqlimā, a twin sister of Hābīl, who was born together with her. Then, the Imam was asked by the man of Qurayshī whether they had given birth to any children. The Imam said: "Yes." The man said: "So that is what the Magian do these days." the Imam said: "The Magian did it after it was banned by God." Then the Imam added: "Do not reject this law; this is of the religion of God. Did God not create Adam and then his mate from his loins, and did He not make her lawful to him? The situation at that time was so, and it was considered to be lawful, and later, God sent down the verse to make it unlawful."

This hadith agrees with the outward meaning of the Qur'an, and it is consistent with all. That is because if we give priority to some hadiths, the hadiths that are contrary to these, and they say God sent down an angel from Heaven for Hābīl to marry, and let Qābīl marry a *jinn*, it necessarily follows that the human race is not from Adam, but the offspring of the angels and *jinn*. That is, instead of Adam, the human origin would be Adam, angels, and the *jinn*, which is absolutely wrong, because all

people's origin is Adam. They belong to Adam, but not to angels and *jinn*. Moreover, these hadiths are too weak to be taken seriously, and as we see, they contradict the Qur'an; for more details see 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mizān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 2, pp. 143–50.

However, that which Imam Ali answered to the question of Ash'ath Ibn Qays is that the king had mixed up the truth (the logical command) with falsehood (the religious command), and according to the marriages of the children of Adam, he ignored his religious duty that was a part of the religion; in this way, he cheated his people and issued that law for all people. Therefore, the Magians' religious marriage with near relatives is unlawful.

304. This hadith, just up to here when the Imam says: "This man was my brother, Elias," has been mentioned by Shaykh Ṭabarsī in *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, pp. 384–85.
305. *Tawhīd* of Ṣaḍīq (Maktabat Ṣaḍūq, 1398 AH). pp. 304–8, the first hadith from section 43; Ṣaḍūq has narrated this hadith completely in *Amāli* (lithograph), pp. 205–8, by means of three chains from Ahmad Ibn Hasan Qaṭṭān, Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn Mūsā Daqqāq, and Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Sanā'ī; all these three have taken it from Ahmad Ibn Yaḥyā Ibn Zakarīyyā Qaṭṭān, from Muhammad Ibn Abbās, from Muhammad Ibn Abi al-Sarā', from Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Yūnus, from Sa'd Ibn Ṭarīf Kanānī, and from Aṣbagh Ibn Nubātah. At the bottom of the page, he has the explanation of Imams Hasan and Husayn, and their preaching on the pulpit in the mosque. Sayyed Hāshim Baḥrānī, in *Ghāyat al-Marām*, part two, p. 521, on the first hadith from Ibn Bābwayh in *Amāli*, has narrated just by means of these three chains, and he has just this part of hadith: "I am the City of Knowledge and Ali is its gate"; however, on pp. 524–25 he has explained the hadith in detail.

I suspect the first part of the hadith, where Imam Ali begins his speech on the pulpit, and the second part of the hadith are in fact two separate hadiths. The two hadiths are adulterated by mistakes and by being made into one whole hadith. The best proof for this is that the beginning of the hadith clearly says that the Imam made this speech of his when he got the leadership and when people went on swearing allegiance to him, and that time was 35 AH. At that time Imam Hasan was 33 years old, and Imam Husayn 32. The last sentence in the hadith that Ali told them was: "Now you climb the pulpit for lecturing so that the Quraysh get to know [your talent], and after my demise, no one

will say Husayn knew nothing." This is not a sensible statement, because after more than 30 years the Quraysh would have known them well. Secondly, the statement of the Imam, "I will hide myself somewhere in order not to be seen, but so that I can see you lecturing," is not an appropriate statement for such a great Imam to say to his son to encourage him to lecture in the public. Thirdly, the two speeches of Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn are too short to be called historical speeches. Fourthly, it has been narrated that when Imam Hasan descended the pulpit, Ali embraced him while giving him kisses on his face, which is quite plausible for the face of a very young boy. Apart from that, it must be said that at the end of the hadith, he explains the sermon of Imam Ali after the demise of the Holy Prophet, and the Imamate transference proves that Imam Hasan was then seven or eight years old, and when Imam Ali had made a speech about his priority, he told Hasan and Husayn all about it, and the narrator has taken those two separate hadiths as one and has written it as one event happening at one time.

306. Shaykh Mufid has given a similar hadith in *Irshād*, p. 125:

The historians and narrators have narrated that a man went to Imam Ali and said: "O you the Imam, tell me if you have seen your Creator that you are worshipping." The Imam answered: "Woe upon you, eyes cannot see Him, but hearts feel Him through belief. He has been known through His guidance and attributes. He is not to be compared with creatures, and the common senses cannot feel Him." Then the man turned back while saying: "God knows where He has set up His Divine Mission!"

307. In the past, they believed that the male and female sexes belonged only to the human being and animals. But later on it became clear that all the trees and plants were the same, created in pairs of sexes, and the verse ...*and We send the winds to fertilize...*(15:22) makes it clearer. However, it is not so with the stones and the other things. This verse of the Qur'an:

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

proves that God has created everything in pairs of sexes, and nowadays it has become quite clear in the science of physics that all the particles consist of positive and negative electricity [commonly carried by protons and electrons, respectively]. These two negative powers cannot be together; one of them will repel

the other. This is of the miraculous statements of the Master of the Faithful, who, after saying:

مَوْلَى بَيْنَ مَتَاعِدَاتِهَا، مُفَرَّقَ بَيْنَ مَتَدَانِيَاتِهَا

immediately says:

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَخَلَقْنَاهُ زَوْجَيْنِ

and of everything We created in pairs.

308. *Tawhīd Ṣadūq*, pp. 308–9, hadith no. 2, section 43; Ya‘qūb Kulaynī in *Usūl al-Kāfi* (Maṭba‘a Ḥaydariyya), in the section of *Jawāmi‘ Tawhīd*, vol. 1, pp. 138–39, hadith no. 4, from Muhammad Ibn Abi Abdullah, extracted from Imam Ṣādiq, from Imam Ali, while answering Dhī‘lab, narrated in the middle of the Imam’s sermon. Moreover, Sayyid Raḍī in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 184, on pp. 354–61, has mentioned it with some more explanations; *Tawhīd Ṣadūq*, pp. 34–41 and ‘*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (lithography, 1275 AH), from pages 150 to 153, from the first volume with some explanation from Imam Riḍā. In ‘*Uyūn* and *Tawhīd* from Muhammad Ibn Hasan Ibn Ahmad Ibn Walīd, from Muhammad Ibn ‘Amr Kaṭīb, from Muhammad Ibn Ziyā Qulmazī, from Muhammad Ibn Abi Ziyād Jūdī, from Muhammad Ibn Yaḥyā Ibn Omar Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, who said: “I heard it from Abu al-Hasan al-Riḍā, who was speaking about *Tawhīd* in front of Ma’mūn.” Ibn Abi Ziyād says:

Ahmad Ibn Abdullah ‘Alawī has similarly narrated to me from some of their masters, backed by some others among them, from Qāsim Ibn Ayyūb ‘Alawī, who says when Ma’mūn decided to give the guardianship to Imam Riḍā, he called the Banī Hāshim (Banī Abbās) to come together and then said: “I have decided to nominate Riḍā as my successor.” The Banī Hāshim were jealous and said: “What! Do you want to nominate an ignorant young man, who has no experience in the government as the successor? Send one of us to fetch him and ask him something to answer, and then his ignorance will become obvious to you!” Ma’mūn sent one to the Imam and he came to Ma’mūn. The Banī Hāshim told him: “O Abu al-Hasan, climb the pulpit and say something about God’s Unity so that we come to know it and then follow your guidance and worship Him.” The Imam climbed the pulpit calmly and sat there without saying a single word at first; then he sat up straight, praised and lauded the Oneness of the Creator, and sent his peace and blessing upon the Prophet and his Household and started his speech up to the end...

309. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, first sermon, ed. Muhammad ‘Abduh, vol. 1, pp. 14–16; *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, pp. 294–98.
310. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 63, vol.1, pp. 112–14.
311. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 150, vol. 1, pp. 274–75.
312. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 161, vol. 1, pp. 300–2.
313. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 184, vol. 1, pp. 354–61. This sermon has been written up to the end of the sermon by Shaykh Ṭabarsī in *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, pp. 299–304.
314. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 354.
315. Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Tawḥīd*, pp. 83–84; Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Khīṣāl* (Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, 1389 AH), p. 2; Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Ma‘āni al-Akḥbār* (Maktaba al-Ḥaydarī, 1379 AH), p. 4.
316. In *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 298, Ṭabarsī has narrated this sermon from *Irshād*, but he has stated here:

نقى الصفات عنه.

317. *Irshād*, pp. 124–25; Shaykh Ṭabarsī, *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, pp. 298–99.
318. *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 299.
319. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 183, vol. 1, pp. 350–51; Ṭabarsī has mentioned all of this sermon in *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 305.
320. *Ma‘āni al-Akḥbār*, p. 10, the section of *al-Tawḥīd wa al-‘Adl*, hadith no. 1.
321. Part of Kumayl’s supplication.
322. *ibid*.
323. There is no difference between a noun and an adjective. If an adjective accompanies a noun to give it the necessary attribution, it is considered to be an adjective, but when it carries the meaning by itself, it can be considered to be a noun.
324. *al-Mizān fi Tafsīr al-Qur’an*, vol. 6, pp. 96–108.
325. Divine Unity is not numerical. Numerical unity means the oneness of something that has the possibility of recurrence. In the paradigm of numerical unity, we can imagine that the essence (quiddity) and form of an existent is realizable in another individual being. In such cases, the unity of an individual possessing that quiddity is numerical oneness and stands in opposition to multiplicity. “It is one in a numerical sense” means that there is not another like it, and inevitably this kind of unity entails the quality of being restricted in number, which is a defect; because one is less in number as compared to two or more of its kind. But, if a being is assumed to be such that its recurrence would be impossible, since it is infinite and unlimited, and if we assume another existent like it, it would follow that it is the

same as the first being or that it is something that is not similar to it and therefore cannot be called a second instance of it. In such a case, unity is not numerical. That is, this kind of unity is not one opposed to multiplicity. Therefore this unity would not mean that "there are not two, three, or more of its kind," but would mean that a second to it is inconceivable. This kind of unity can be only explained through the doctrines of "primacy of existence over quiddity," and "gradational reality of existence." (editor)

326. Using this philosophical idea of Imam Ali, Mullā Ṣadrā Shirāzī could systematically demonstrate it well. He rejected the view of Ibn Sīnā, who attempted to discuss the Unity of God by the concept of His Essence.
327. Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 69 says:

My Master and Shaykh narrated to me: "Abu al-Khayr Muṣaddiq Ibn Shabīb Wasītī, in 603 AH, when I recited this sermon to Abu Muhammad Abdullah Ibn Ahmad, known as Ibn Khashāb..." and goes on saying:

I told him: "Do you think this sermon is invented?" He said: "No, by God I am sure that it is prepared by Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib and it is as true as I know you to be a rightful man." I said: "Most people say: 'This sermon is made up by Sayyid Raḍī.'" He said: "How on earth do Sayyid Raḍī and other scholars have such a style and penmanship? We have gotten used to Raḍī's writings, and we know the style of his penmanship, so there is no similarity between this and his writing. These phrases can never be his; they are not written by Raḍī." Then he said: "By God, I am quite sure that this kind of writing goes back some two hundred years before Raḍī. I am an expert in ancient styles of writing, and I recognize the old scholars' writing from those at the time of Raḍī. I even know the writing of those who lived before the father of Raḍī lived."

Then Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd says:

I have found the most part of this sermon in our master and Shaykh Abu al-Qāsim Balkhī, the Imam of Baghdad, obtained from Mu'atazila's writings. He lived at the time of Muqtadir long before Raḍī was born. Also, I found most of it in the book of Abu Ja'far Ibn Qubbah, one of the Imami scholars, and it is a famous book known as *Kitāb Inṣāf*. Abu Ja'far Ibn Qubbah used to be a student of Abu al-Qāsim Balkhī, and he died during that period before Raḍī.

328. *al-Mizān fi Tafsīr al-Qurʿan*, vol. 6, pp. 109–10.
 329. *Ghāyat al-Marām*, part two, sections 35 and 36, pp. 524–26.
 330. *Ghāyat al-Marām*, part two, sections 43 and 44, pp. 536–39.
 331. *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, pp. 337–38.
 332. *Ihtijāj*, vol.1, pp. 339–40.
 333. One *ḥuqb* means 80 years. It also represents a long period of time.
 334. *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, pp. 385–88; Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf Zarandī has written it in *Naẓm Dūrār al-Simṭayn* (Najaf: Maṭbaʿat al-Qaḍā, 1377 AH), pp. 125–27; in *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl*, vol. 2, p. 204. Māmqānī says:

Shaykh has considered him to be one of the companions of Imam Ali and has said: "He was a Kharijī." Then after some explanation of his condition, he said: "May God show hatred to him; he is away from the school of the Shi'a." One day when he saw Ali preaching, he waited until Ali finished his preaching, and then Ibn Kawwā' went closer and said: "May God send you to death; you are a devil preacher," or he said: "You are a devil orator!" Another day Ibn Kawwā' was performing ablution but using more water than needed, and Imam Ali told him: "You used water lavishly!" He answered: "But the blood of the Muslims you have murdered is more than this water I am using for my ablution." Shaykh Abbās Qumī has written in *Alkuniya wa Alqāb* (Ṣaydā: Maṭbaʿat al-ʿIrḩān, 1358 AH), vol. 1, p. 383, that his name was Abdullah, and one day when he was following the Imam in the congregational prayer, he deliberately recited aloud this verse:

وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَئِن أَشْرَكَتَ لَيَحْطَبُنَّ عَمَلَكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ.

...and it has been revealed to you and to those before you; if you set up a partner to Him, your efforts will fail and you will be among the losers (39:61). Leading the prayer, Ali was also reciting it aloud. So the Imam lowered his voice and Ibn Kawwā' kept quiet. Once again, the Imam continued reciting the verse and he too did it as before and the Imam paused for a short time. For the third time they both did the same; he deliberately recited the same verse aloud and annoyed the Imam. At the third round the Imam said:

كَصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَا يَسْتَخِفُّكَ اللَّهُ إِنَّا لَا يَرَوْنَ

...Be patient [for] God's promise is true, and do not let those, who have no certainty [of faith], create a feeling of inferiority in you (30:60).

335. *Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, pp. 340–41.

336. *Istīʿāb*, vol. 3, p. 113; in the edition of *Istīʿāb* that has been published in the margin of *al-Iṣṣabah*, vol. 3, 40.
337. Abul Qāsim Ali Ibn Husayn Ibn Hibah, *Tārikh Damishq* (Beirut: Dār al-Taʿāruf lil Maṭbūʿāt, 1395 AH), vol. 3, pp. 23–24
338. *Dhakāʾir al-ʿUqbā*, p. 83.
339. *al-Iṣṣabah*, vol. 2, pp. 502–3.
340. *Safinat al-Bihar*, vol. 1, p. 586.
341. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 187, vol. 1, pp. 364–65.
342. The beginning of verse 21, chapter 52, *al-Tūr* is: ...and those who have believed, also their offspring who have followed them in faith, and the second half the verse is: ...and We shall not deprive them of their good deeds—every man is in pledge for what he has earned.
343. *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 13, pp. 105–9.
344. *Tafsir Kashshāf*, vol. 2, p. 140, under verse 18, *sūrah* 27, *al-Namal*:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ كَانَتْ تَمْلًا بِأَهْلِهَا تَمْلًا يَدْخُلُوهَا كَمَا كُنْتُمْ لَا تَحِيطُونَ
جَنُودُهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

...When they came to the valley of the ants, an ant said, "O ants! Enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his armies should crush you without noticing it."

345. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 355.
346. In this question, the woman tries to say: "According to what you say, if ʿĀyisha left the house without the permission of the Prophet, she deserves to be cursed, and if she left her home with the permission of the Prophet, then may God's curse be upon him!" And as we two believe that the Prophet does not deserve to be cursed, then she must have come out her house without his permission, and she deserves to be cursed.
347. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 8, p. 183.
348. Hākim Nishaburi in *Mustadrak al-Hākim* (Ḥaydarābād), vol. 2, p. 466; Dhahabī in *Talkhīṣ Mustadrak* (published in the margin of *Mustadrak al-Hākim*), and both of them have considered it to be correct.
349. Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsir*, vol. 4, p. 231 in two ways, and he has also said: "This sentence has been approved in another style."
350. Abu Omar, in *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm*, vol. 1, p. 114; Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍarah* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Jandī, 1391), vol. 2, p. 198; Abdul Raḥmān Suyūfī, *Tārikh al-Khulafā* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Tijāriyyat al-Kubrā, 1389 AH), p. 124; *Itqān* of Suyūfī, vol. 2, p. 319; *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, vol. 7, p. 338; Ibn Hajar ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī* (Dār Ihyaʾ al-Turāth al-Arabi, 1408 AH),

- vol. 8, p. 485; Mahmoud Ibn Ahmad 'Aynī, *Umdat al-Qārī* (Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth al-Arabi), vol. 9, p. 167; *Miftāh al-Sa'āda*, vol. 1, p. 400.
351. Abu Omar in *Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm*, vol. 1, p. 114, and in its brief version, p. 57.
352. Abu Na'īm Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Isfahani, *Ḥilliyat al-Atwliyā'* (Egypt: Maṭba'at al-Khānjī, 1351 AH), vol. 1, p. 67; *Miftāh al-Sa'āda*, vol. 1, p. 400.
353. Shaykh al-Islam Ḥammu'ī in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* has narrated this from Abu Sa'īd Khudrī
354. This hadith has been narrated by Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbalī from *al-Manāqib* of Ibn Shahr Āshūb, and by Baghawī from *Mu'jam* and Abu Omar in *Ilm*, vol. 1, p. 114; Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī in *al-Ri'yāḍ al-Naḍarah*, vol. 2, p. 198; and Ibn Ḥajar in *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah*, p. 76.
355. In Muhammad al-Wasītī Zabīdī, *Tāj al-Urūs* (Egypt: Maṭba'at al-Khayriyya, 1306-7 AH), vol. 5, p. 268, under the entry of *ama'a*, with his chains from Ḥārith A'war, has narrated that Imam Ali was asked about a problem. The Imam, acting quickly, got ready, put his sandals on, and wore his robe, and then smilingly came out of the house, and the people told him:

يا أمير المؤمنين، انك كنت إذا سئلت عن المسألة تكون فيها كالسكة الحماءة؟ قل: اني كنت خائفاً
ولارأى لحقن. ثم اننا يقول: اذا الشكلات

"O Master of the Faithful, when you were asked about this matter you became furious in answering it; why?" The Imam answered: "At that very moment, I badly needed to urinate, and this kind of person never has sound opinions for solving a problem..." Then he recited the elegy [in the main text].

356. In *Tāj al-Urūs*, vol. 5, p. 268, after reciting four lines of this elegy, the author says:

The word

الإئمة

is said to mean one aimlessly and without any good excuse wandering about among the people. It is narrated that when they asked Ibn Mas'ūd about this word, he said: "It means when one says: 'I am here, among the people.'" Layth says about the word

الإئمة

"It means that one says to every individual: 'I am just with you (not anyone else).'"

357. Muhammad Ibn Ismā'īl Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* (Egypt: Ṭab' Amīriyyah, 1312 AH), vol. 1, p. 46, and vol. 1, pp. 240-41; *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. 1, p. 278; *Musnad Abu Dāwūd* (Dār Iḥyā' al-Sunna), p. 356.
358. Abul Qāsim Ali Ibn Husayn Ibn Hibatullah, *Tārīkh Ibn 'Asākir* (Beirut: Dār al-Ta'āruf lil Maṭbū'āt, 1395 AH), vol. 2, p. 305.
359. It is said in *Aqrab al-Mawārid*

اللوبة

is a kind of food that is prepared for someone else and kept secret, as when a man says to his wife: "Stand up and fetch the food you have already prepared for a rainy day."

The plural form of

اللوبة

is

لوايا .

As if, by saying so, Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān wanted to play the role of Jesus when he said:

وَأَنْبِئْكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدْخُلُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ

"I will tell you what you should eat and what you should store in your houses."

360. *Tārīkh* of Khaṭīb Baghdadi, vol. 3, p. 166.
361. *al-Intiqā'* of Abu Omar Ibn 'Abd al-Birr.
362. Dhahabī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Hufāz*, vol. 2, p. 288.
363. *al-Ghadir*, vol. 6, pp. 191-96.
364. *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 125.
365. See *Tārīkh Ṭabarī*, vol. 3, p. 210; *Sirat Ibn Hishām*, vol. 2, p. 661; Ibn Qutaybah Dīnwarī, *al-Imamat wa al-Siyasat* (Egypt: Maṭba'at al-Muṣṭafā al-Bābī, 1312 AH), vol. 1, p. 16.
366. *Ṣīrāt al-Mustaḥqīm ilā Mustaḥqay al-Taqdīm*, Zayn al-Dīn Ali Ibn Yūsuf Āmulī Nubātī Bayādhī, vol. 2, p. 296.

And similarly, it is said in the book *Ṣīrāt al-Mustaḥqīm*, vol. 2, p. 26:

He said to Ibn Bābwayh: "Do you consider Abu Bakr to be better than Ali?" He said: "No." Then they said: "Do you consider Ali to be better than Abu Bakr?" He said: "No." They asked: "Is there not

any difference or priority between them?" He said: "Yes, there is." They asked: "So what is that difference or priority between those two?" He said: "Either two things are alike, so there is not any difference between them and neither has priority over the other, or they are not alike; so there is no similarity between Abu Bakr and Ali, because since the Prophet called Ali his brother it became clear that he was like the Prophet but not like Abu Bakr."

367. *al-Ghadir*, vol. 6, p. 196.

368. Suyūṭī in *Jam' al-Jawāmī* in vol. 6, p. 15, has been narrated from 'Abd al-Razzāq, Bayhaqī, and Abu al-Shaykh in *Farā'id*, as well as Haythamī in *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 4, p. 227, from Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib, has narrated from Omar, saying that:

سألت النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم كيف قسم الجدة؟ قال: ما سألتك عن ذلك يا عمر؟ إني أظنك تموت قبل أن تعلم ذلك

"I asked the Prophet of God what the condition of the inheritance for a grandfather was." The Prophet answered: "O Omar, what is this question you are asking me? I think that you will die before getting to know this problem!" Sa'īd Ibn Musayyib later announced that Omar died before getting to know this problem.

369. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 2, p. 234; *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, *Kitāb Ādāb*, vol. 3, p. 637; *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. 3, p. 19; *Sunan Dārimī*, vol. 2, p. 274; *Sunan Abi Dāwūd*, vol. 2, p. 340; *Mushkil al-Āthār*, p. 499; *al-Ghadir*, vol. 6, p. 158; Muslim has written in another *Ṣaḥīḥ* that Abi Ka'b said to Omar "O son of Khaṭṭāb, be not the means of torture upon the companions of the Prophet!" Omar said: "Glory be to God! I heard something and I wanted to investigate it." And it is narrated in another place that Abu Sa'īd said: "I am the youngest one among these people." In *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Nawawī says: "The narration means that this hadith is very important among us. It is well known among the elderly and the young. Even our youths have memorized it; they have heard it from the Prophet."

370. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 237, ed. M. 'Abduh, vol. 1, p. 467.

They are life for knowledge and death for ignorance. Their forbearance tells you of their knowledge, and their silence of the wisdom of their speaking. They do not go against the right, nor do they differ (among themselves) about it. They are the pillars of Islam and the asylums of [its] protection. With them right has returned to its position and wrong has left its place and its tongue is severed

from its root. They have understood the religion attentively and carefully, not by mere hearsay or from relaters, because the relaters of knowledge are many but those who understand are few.

371. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, sermon 145, vol. 1, p. 267; we already mentioned this sermon in *Knowing the Imams*, vol. 4, lessons 57–60.
 372. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, *ḥikmahs* 172 and 438.
 373. These three-line elegies along with other three-line elegies are mentioned in a poetry collection related to Imam Ali named *Divān al-Shi‘r al-Mansūb ilā al-Imam al-Waṣī Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib* by ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Sayyid al-Ahl, pp. 11-12; and the following is the last part of the elegy:

الناس من جهة التمثال أكفاء، أبوهم آدم والأُم حواء،
 ظن يمكن لهم من أصلهم شرفٌ يفاخرون به طالين والماء،
 وإن أتيت بفقر من ذوى نسبٍ ظنٌ نسبنا جود وعلاء.

People [human beings], in respect to their bodily appearance, are similar to their father Adam and mother Eve
 So if they would not have a [family of] noble origin, they would [as least] be proud of being of soil and water,
 You consider your [family of] noble origin to be an honor, but in fact [the noble] origin is generosity and pedigree!

It is said that these elegies are narrated by Ghazzālī, in *Iḥyā’ al-‘Ulūm*, Shablanjī in *Nūr al-Absār*, Lawīs Shaykhū in *Majānī al-Adab*, and Sharishī in his explanation of *Maqāmāt Karajiyyah*, from *Maqāmāt Ḥarirī*. They have done so with some difference in the phrases and styles. Sharishī has contented himself with the first two lines of it. However, in the lithograph printing, he has added one line to it on page one, that is:

وإنما نهلت الناس أوعيةٌ مستودعتٌ وللأحساب آباء.

“...and the mothers are [like] bowls holding the sperm of their men; however, what is counted on are the fathers.” This line is absolutely not from the Imam, and someone has added it, because its meaning is quite different. See ‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī’s discussion on this in *al-Mizān*, vol. 4, p. 331.

374. Imam Ali in a *Divān* related to him has some other elegies that are worthy of notice:

وفى الجهل قبل الموت موت لاهله واجسادهم قبل القبور قبور.

...and in ignorance, before the death approaches, the ignorant has died,
and their bodies are laid in graves before graves.

375. *al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaqīm*, vol. 2, p. 19.

376. *ibid.*

377. See the *Divān Maghribī*, p. 85.

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